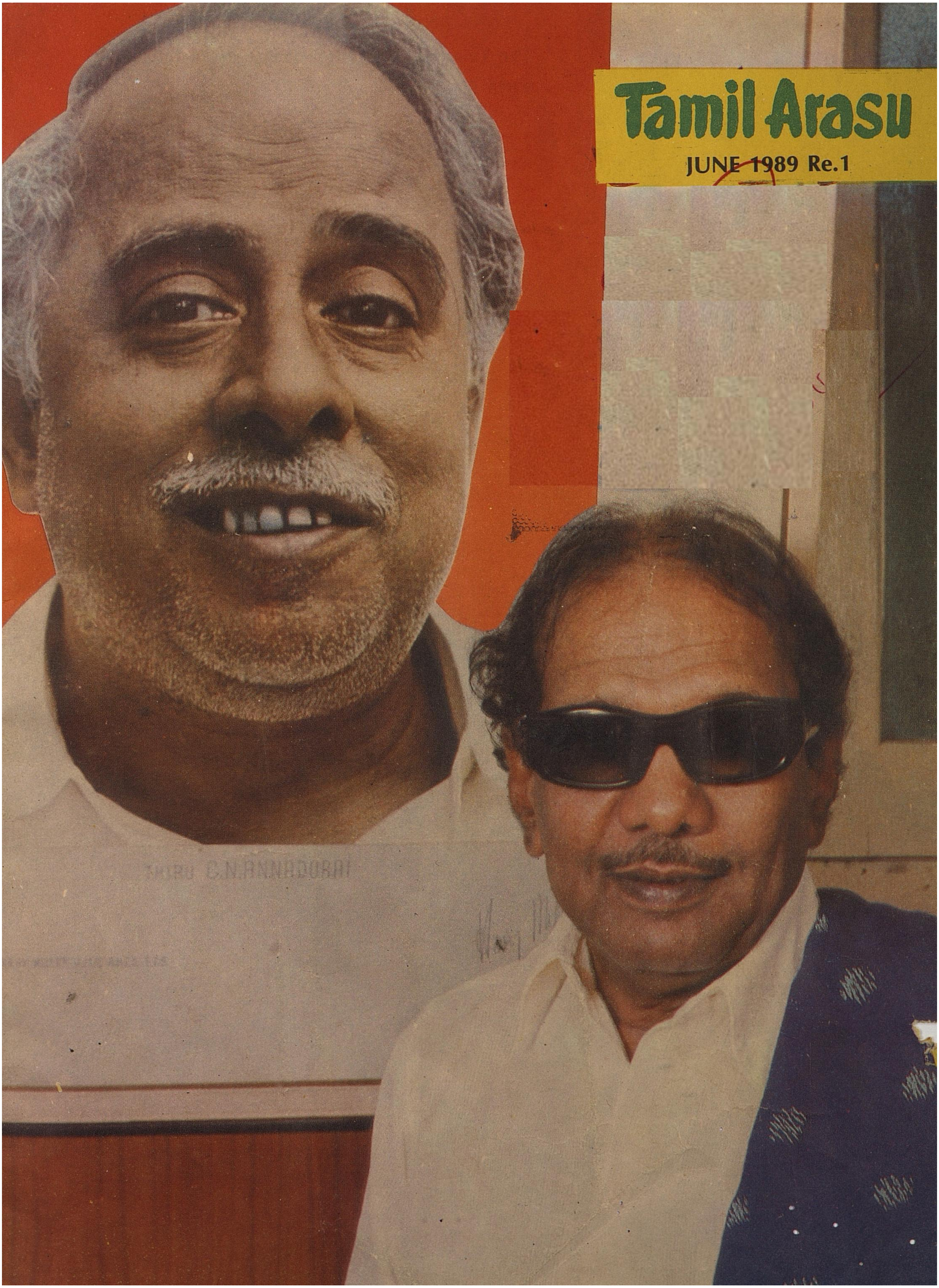
Tamil Arasu

JUNE 1989 Re.1



The Thiruvarur Car Festival was held after six years on 7-5-'89.

TAMIL ARASU

A monthly journal of the Government of Tamil Nadu

Thiruvalluvar Year 2020
June 1989

★ A Priceless Pearl

★ Tamil and Dr. Kalaignar

★ Hon'ble Chief Minister with Leaders

★ The Chief Minister's letter to the Prime Minister

★ The Trust for Development

★ The Central Drought Team Visits Tamil Nadu

★ May Day gift for auto, rickshaw drivers

★ Rs.15 crores rebate planned for Handloom Co-operatives

★ Fame - Thou art mysterious

★ Speech of Minister for H.R. & C.E. and Forest in the Conference of Forest Ministers

★ Inauguration of State Planning Commission

★ Hindu Women get equal property rights

A PRICELESS PEARL

M.S. VENKATACHALAM

M Muthuvelar's Karunanidhi a priceless pearl

K Kindness from him flows like 'manna'

A An ardent follower of endearing Anna

R Reigns Supreme O'er all Tamil hearts!

U Undaunted hero of countless bards

N Never tired of rendering his toil

A Ambitious to enthrone Mother Tamil!

N Numberless hurdles had he to face

I Indefatigable will, his weapon for success

D Dravidian Movement's doughty Warrior!

H Historic deeds, to his credit, galore!

I In our hearts he'll live for ever!

TAMIL AND DR. KALAIGNAR

By Thiru K. Srinivasan M.A.B.T.
Retired Headmaster, Madurai

OH! TAMIL!! YOU HAVE A PAARI NOW!!!

King's chariot for the Jasmine creeper!

Hundreds of years ago, the great Parri, the Tamil king created history by revealing to the world his benevolent and munificient mind, in his act of offering his own chariot to the Jasmine creeper. The feelings he underwent after seeing the suffering creeper without a hold, actuated his mind to fix his own chariot as the supporting pole for the creeper to hold it and flourish afterwards. Had he not done this rare act, the creeper would have met with disaster. Without doubt, the noble action of the kind-hearted king not only made the creeper flourish, but also it showed that no other person would have made such a great and noble act, as Paari did and no wonder he got into the immortal world and obtained the covetable title of Vallal!

Tamil sweet rich and ancient language

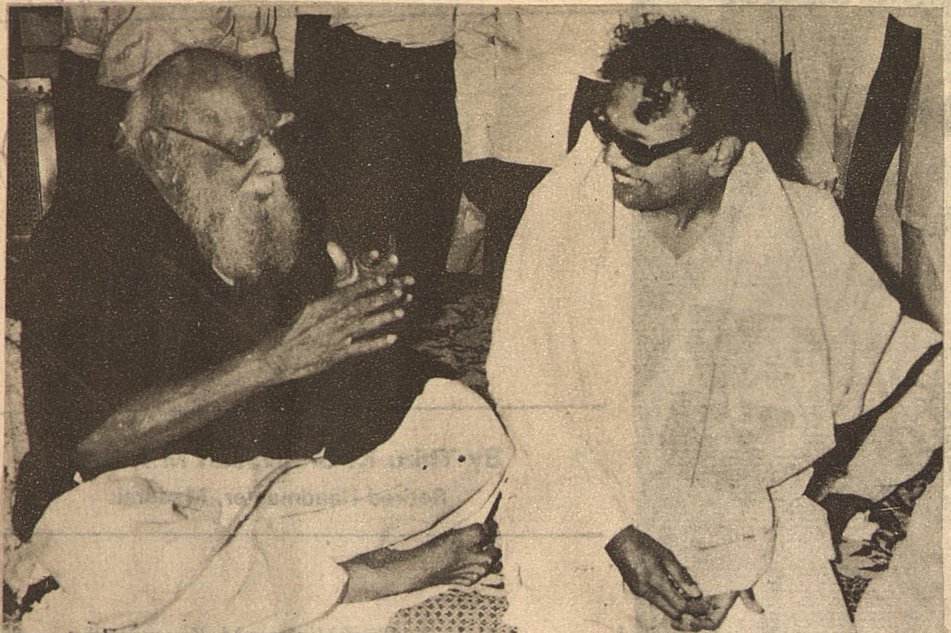
Now to our comparison. Tamil, a sweet and an ancient and rich language in every sense of the term, in this generation requires a Paari for its development and appreciation of its beauty and its further growth. When everyone is claiming service for Tamil, Dr. Kalaignar, Hon'ble Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi, has been rendering silent service which is praiseworthy. For the past fifty years or so, in every walk of life his service and sacrifice for the cause of Tamil is incomparable! His writings-hundreds and thousands of articles-breathe the soul of Tamil and Tamil only! His prose is always poetical and his poems are still more so! All of them are soaked in and saturated with inimitable love and undying passion appreciating the many sided beauty of Tamil language!

Golden Age for Tamil and Tamil Culture

He has been an ardent champion and sincere devotee of the Muse of Tamil Poetry and no other motive is more powerful in his mind than the love of Tamil. The beauty of it is that his breath, thought and talk revolve round Tamil and Tamil only! Of course, he had to exhibit his love vehemently when occasions demanded! There are scholars and scholars who have sincerely sacrificed for the cause of Tamil, but Dr. Kalaignar only has the guts to do anything and everything for the cause of Tamil. Last century, Poet Bharathi placed Tamil Annai on the throne, showering all praises on her Now, Dr. Kalaignar, with indomitable will and undiminishing determination, is doing everything for Tamil language, in every sphere, it is good fortune that the Muse of Tamil has found succour and sustenance from a Paari, our Dr. Kalaignar.

Vazhiya Senthamizh and Vazhga Natramizhar!

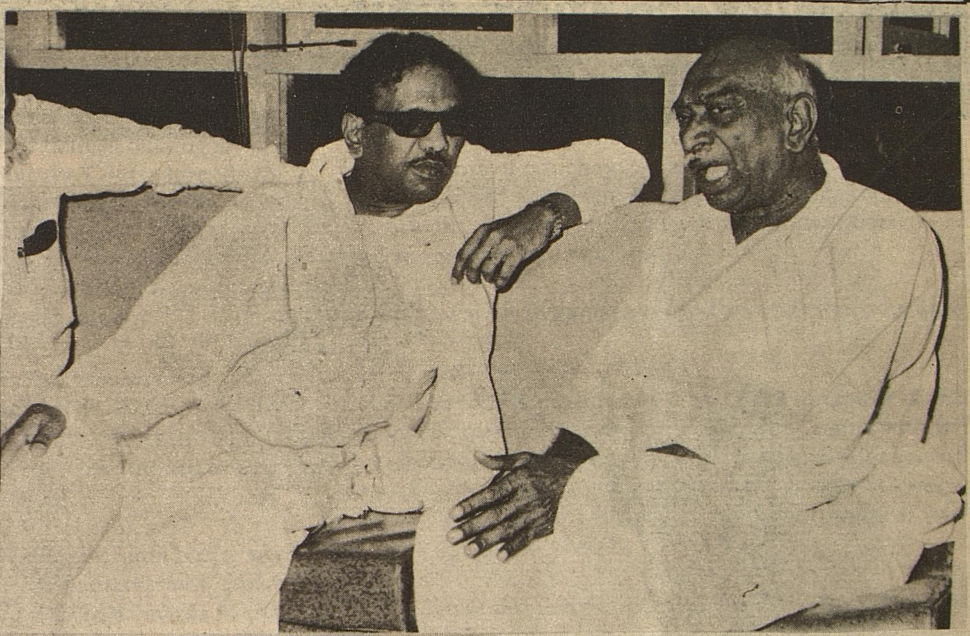
Hon'ble Chief Minister Dr. M. Karunanidhi With Leaders



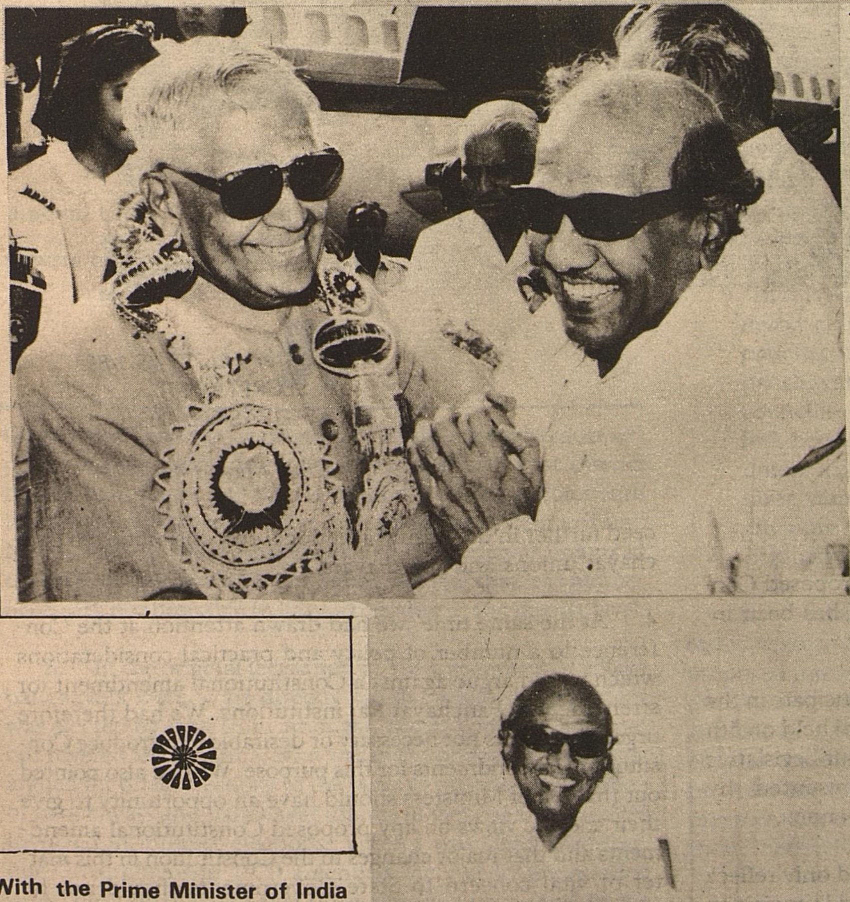
With Thanthai Periyar

With Perarignar Anna

With Rajaji



With Thiru Kamarajar



With the President of India

With the Prime Minister of India

The Chief Minister's letter to the Prime Minister on the Proposed Constitution (64th Amendment) Bill 1989

M. KARUNANIDHI
Chief Minister

D.O. Letter No.7791/S.1/89
SECRETARIAT
MADRAS-600 009

25th May, 1989.

Dear Prime Minister.

I am writing this in connection with the proposed Constitution (64th Amendment) Bill. 1989 which has been introduced in Parliament on 15th May 1989.

2. As you are aware, I was not able to participate in the Conference of Chief Ministers on Panchayat Raj held on 5th May 1989 on account of the Golden Jubilee of our Legislative Assembly. However, our State was represented by Thiru Nanjil K. Manoharan, Minister for Revenue.

3. Our Statement at this Conference could only reflect our general views on the subject since the detailed provisions of the proposed Constitutional amendment were not available at that time. We had made it clear at the Conference that our Government was firmly committed to the objective of strengthening local bodies. In fact, within a short period of assuming office we have taken several concrete steps for greater decentralisation of powers, responsibilities, and resources to local bodies in Tamil Nadu. We propose to proceed further in delegating additional responsibilities to panchayat unions and panchayats.

4. At the same time, we had drawn attention at the Conference to a number of policy and practical considerations which would argue against a Constitutional amendment for strengthening Panchayat Raj institutions. We had therefore urged that it was not necessary or desirable to introduce Constitutional amendments for this purpose. We had also pointed out that Chief Ministers should have an opportunity to give their specific views on any proposed Constitutional amendments and that major changes to the Constitution in this matter of vital concern to State Governments should not be rushed through especially at a time when general elections to Parliament are due within a matter of months.

5. We have now carefully examined the proposed Bill. In introducing a separate Part in the Constitution relating to panchayats, the Bill would appear to make a basic change in the structure of the Constitution by adding new levels of administration to the Union and the States. Further, most

of the provisions included in the Bill relate to matters which are appropriately subjects for legislation by the States under Entry 5 in List II of the Seventh Schedule. In spirit and substance the proposed amendments thus amount to an inroad into the autonomy and exclusive powers of the State Governments. Morever, the recent guidelines relating to the Jawahar Rozgar scheme indicate that the Centre intends to use the panchayat setup to bypass the States. In this way, the Centre will be only adding to its burdens and responsibilities which is not in its own interest. These are the grounds on which our Government is opposed in principle to the proposed Constitutional amendments.

6. We also feel that it is not wise to impose uniform arrangements throughout India in regard to Panchayat Raj. Each State should be left to implement the decentralisation process in a manner best suited to its circumstances and situation.

7. The present panchayat legislation in Tamil Nadu was introduced in 1958 when Thiru K. Kamaraj was Chief Minister. At that time, there were 11 district boards in the State and it was a well considered decision of the then

> "In spirit and substance the proposed amendments amount to an inroad into the autonomy and exclusive powers of the State Governments."

Government and the Legislature to abolish them because experience over nearly four decades had shown that district boards had misused their powers and had lost contact with the people. We therefore have only a two tier system in Tamil Nadu, namely, village panchayats and panchayat unions at the level of the development block. We feel that it is neither necessary nor desirable to have a third tier at the district level.

8. In the original legislation of 1958, members of village panchayats were to be directly elected while the president was elected by, and from amongst, them. Even at that time, our revered leader Anna, who was in the opposition, strongly argued for direct elections to the posts of presidents/chairmen of panchayats and panchayat unions in view of malpractices involved in indirect elections. When I was Chief Minister, our Government in 1970 amended the Act to provide for direct election of panchayat presidents as a first stage. In the case of panchayat union councils, the membership has always been composed of the presidents of village panchayats while in the original legislation the chairman of the council was elected by, and from amongst, them. Following the change made in 1970 for panchayats, direct election was introduced in 1978 for the chairman of the panchayat union also in the second stage when Thiru M.G.R. was Chief Minister. The "Statement of Objects and Reasons" for the amending legislation of 1978 pointed out:

> "The direct election of presidents of panchayats has become popular and panchayats are functioning smoothly. Further, the direct election of presidents of panchayats has eliminated the difficulties and evils of indirect election such as corruption, lifting and kidnapping of members, harassments and frictions."

However, elections to panchayats and panchayat unions were not held until 1986.

9. The 64th Amendment Bill proposes to replace direct elections to the chairmanship of panchayat unions with indirect elections. In doing so, it will reopen avenues for several malpractices in villages and unions which successive Governments in Tamil Nadu, belonging to different political parties, have sought to prevent.

10. I may also point out that the fact that the panchayat union council is composed of the presidents of village panchayat provides an organic link between the two tiers, namely, panchayat at the village level and unions at the block level. This gives panchayat presidents the right and responsibility to take up the claims of their villages to the council and to implement the union's schemes in their villages. Even in the original legislation, considerable emphasis was placed on this link. As was pointed out by the Kamaraj Ministry in introducing this legislation:

> "In this way we seek to ensure that the panchayat union council regards itself and is regarded by panchayats as a co-operative association of the panchayats themselves. The panchayat union councillors will each, individually, form a human link between the panchayats and the panchayat union council and thereby promote mutual understanding and harmonious working of what are only different parts of a single panchayat organisation."

11. In the background of this well designed and time tested feature of the Tamil Nadu pattern, we feel that the proposed amendments which provide for direct election of members to the panchayat union council are retrograde in as much as it severs the organic link between the village panchayats and the panchayat union. The proposed Bill no doubt provides for the representation without vote for panchayat presidents in the council but such representation will render them ineffective apart from making the council unwieldy.

12. We welcome reservation for women and for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in panchayats and panchayat unions. We have ourselves provided for their representation. For exemple, our new Government has decided to provide 25 seats each for scheduled castes and women through elections and co-option in a total number of 150 seats in the Madras Corporation Council. However, the extent of reservation should be left to be decided by each State and

need not be prescribed for India as a whole.

13. The provisions in the Bill relating to the Finance Commission, supervision of panchayat elections by the Election Commission of India, and audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India are unnecessary, cumbersome, and expensive. In our State, resources are transferred to panchayat unions and panchayats through a system of revenue assignments, statutory grants, matching grants, and maintenance and development grants. This system has functioned well. Elections are supervised by the department of rural development and there have been no complaints. The audit is undertaken by the Examiner of Local Fund Accounts who is a functionary of the State Government in an economical and timely manner. These arrangements, which have functioned satisfactorily, do not require any change.

14. Our Government is committed to holding regular elections to panchayats and panchayat union councils once in every five years. We also agree that in case of supersession elections should be held not later than six months. On this issue there is likely to be agreement among all the States. If a Constitutioanl provision is considered desirable, we would suggest that it may be discussed at an all-party conference and a national consensus obtained in the matter.

15. I understand that in your concluding remarks at the Conference of Chief Ministers held on 5th May 1989, you had promised to get in touch with Chief Ministers bilaterally and if necessary, collectively to discuss the proposed Constitutional amendments. You had also mentioned that there was scope for a nationwide debate on this issue between the introduction of the Bill and its consideration in the monsoon session of Parliament. Your speech in Parliament, while introducing the Bill, also indicated that you have an open mind on the issues involved.

16. In this letter, I have put forward a number of reasons for not proceeding with this Bill. There is considerable consensus, if not unanimity, among all major political parties and between the Centre and the States that Panchayat Raj institutions need to be strengthened and activised for mobilising peoples' participation in diverse nation-building activities. It would be best in these circumstances to treat the proposed Bill as a set of suggested guidelines and leave it to the States to modify or improve their Panchayat Legislations in the light of the provisions in the Bill. If, instead, the Bill is pressed it will only introduce needless discord and rigidity in a matter in which consensus and flexibility are called for.

17. We would, therefore, urge you not to proceed with this measure. If this suggestion is not acceptable, I would request you to convene a meeting of Chief Ministers to discuss the matter once again in the light of the proposed amendments to the Constitution. The Bill may also be discussed with the leaders of all political parties represented in Parliament.

18. In order to promote a public debate on this vital issue I am releasing this letter to the press.

With kind regards,

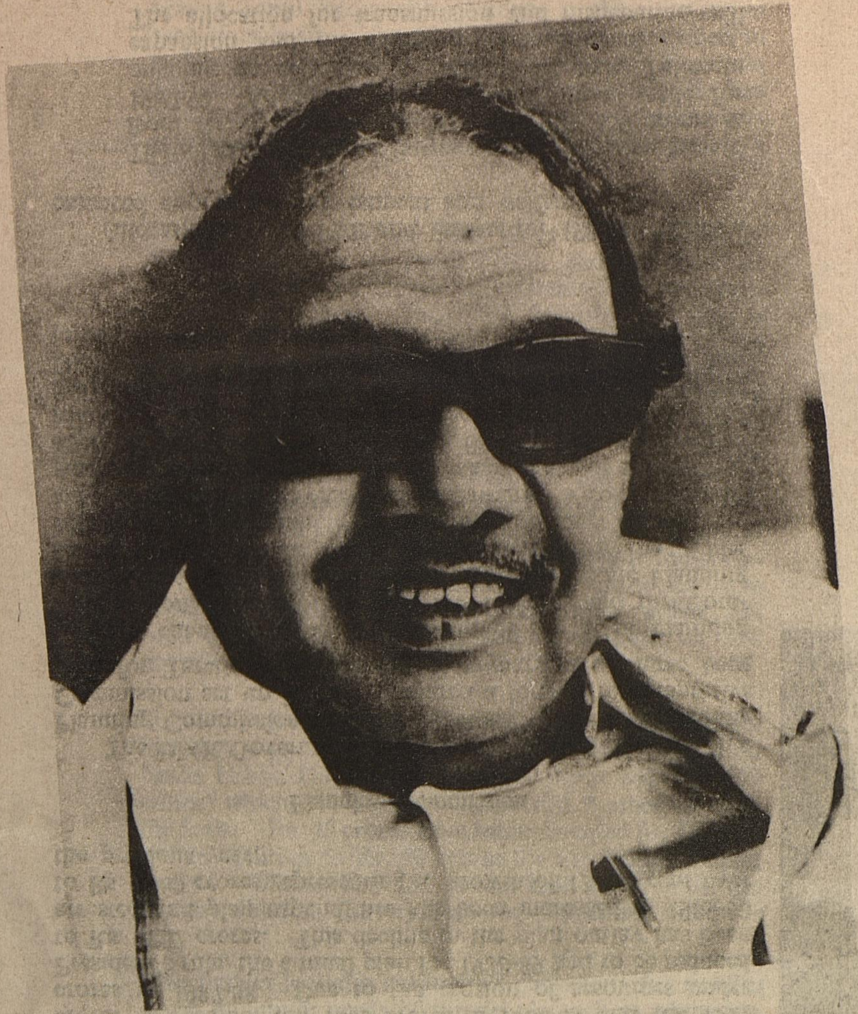
Yours sincerely,

M. Karunanidhi

(M. KARUNANIDHI)

To,
Thiru RAJIV GANDHI,
Prime Minister of India,
Prime Minister's Secretariat,
South Block,
NEW DELHI-110 001.

Thiru Belits Gegmann, Consul and Head of the Cultural Department USSR called on Hon'ble Minister for Education Thiru. K. Anbazhagan at Secretariat on 20.5.89.



Financial Situation

THE administration under President's rule had announced a Plan outlay of Rs. 1457 crores for 1988-89 while being well aware that the resources available for implementing the Plan were only of the order of Rs. 1302 crores. These resources were further eroded on account of shortfalls in receipts, announcement of concessions, new schemes not included in the budget, and increases in non-Plan expenditures. No effort was also undertaken during 1988-89 for additional resource mobilisation. Large deficit in the State budget was repeatedly taken to the notice of the Central Government at the highest level both by the Governor and subsequently by the new Government but no substantial assistance was given by the Centre to meet the deficit created under President's rule.

As a result, the closing deficit for 1988-89 has been estimated at Rs. 154 crores. The Chief Minister Dr. M. Karunanidhi has pointed out in the budget speech that the responsibility for creating this deficit is that of the administration during President's rule and accordingly the Central Government will be pressed to cover it in full at least during 1989-90.

In this very difficult situation, the Government has pursued a responsible policy for financial management. It has not hesitated to raise resources for sustaining a reasonable increase in Plan outlay along with adequate provisions for implementation of its Election Manifesto, Drought relief, pay revision, continuation of existing schemes and initiation of new projects. Even prior to the budget, Rs. 100 crores were mobilised through State excise duties and other levies relating to liquor. This was followed by tariff increases on the part of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board which are expected to fetch Rs. 120 crores in a full year. In the budget, additional taxation of Rs. 50 crores has been effected through increases in sales tax and motor vehicles taxes.

THE THRUST FOR DEVELOPMENT

The various measures for additional resource mobilisation have been carefully designed so as not to increase the burden on the common man. In suitable cases, tax concessions have also been extended such as for agricultural pumpsets.

The Chief Minister has indicated that the net deficit of about Rs. 65 crores arising from the transactions in 1989-90

will be fully covered through economy measures, better tax collection, and from the State's share of consignment tax which is due to be introduced in Parliament by the Centre. He has expressed his firm resolve to practise economy in Government expenditures, to take all efforts to avoid waste whether in Plan or non-Plan schemes, and to eliminate losses and improve returns from public sector corporations.

Plan Outlay

The annual plan outlay in Tamil Nadu was Rs. 1012 crores in 1985-86, Rs. 1203 crores in 1986-87 and Rs. 1337 crores in 1987-88. Due to the erosion of resources under President's rule, the annual plan for 1988-89 had to be reduced to Rs. 1202 crores. This decline in the plan outlay has been arrested and plan expenditure has been increased in 1989-90 to Rs. 1360 crores representing a growth of 13 per cent over the previous year.

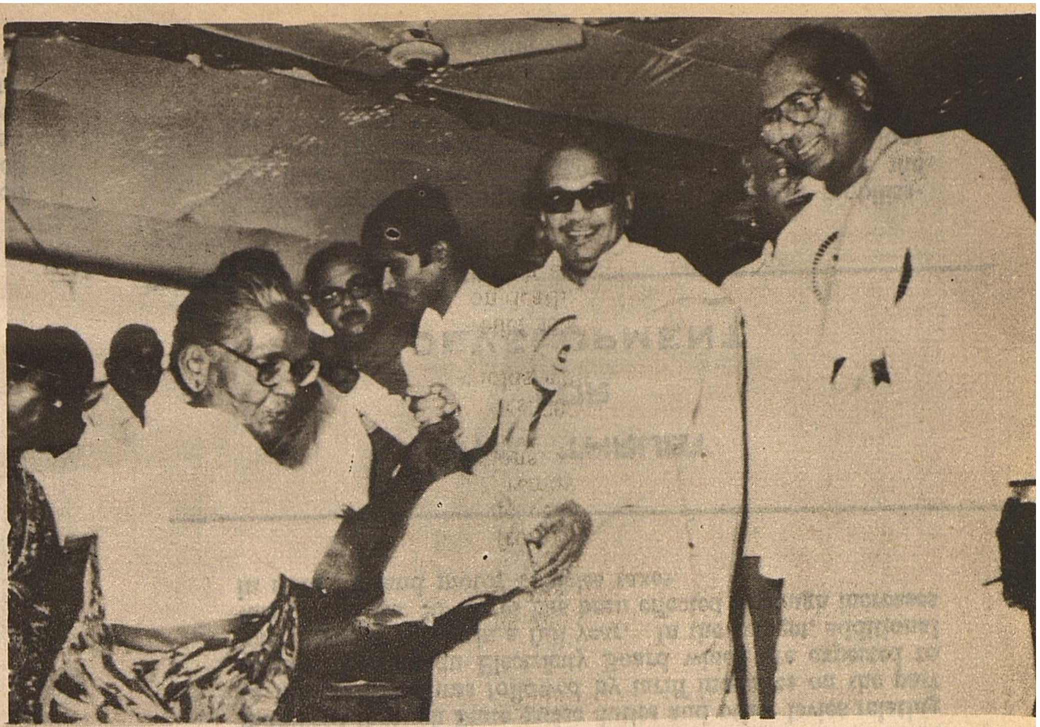
Planning Commission

The DMK Government was the first in India to establish a Planning Commission at the State level. The State Planning Commission set up in 1971 prepared a long term perspective plan for Tamil Nadu. In the past years, there have been frequent changes in the membership of the State Planning Commission, adequate expertise was lacking, and the Commission has not functioned effectively. The State Planning Commission has now been reconstituted with the Chief Minister as Chairman. The members include outstanding experts such as Dr. V.C. Kulandaiswamy, Vice-Chancellor, Anna University, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, eminent agricultural scientist, Dr. M.S. Adiseshaiah, former Vice-Chancellor, Madras University, Thiru M. Sivagnanam, former Chief Secretary, Gujarat, Dr. Ramani Sivaraman, former Director of Medical Education and Thiru G. Chidambaram, former Director, Evaluation and Applied Research Department.

Major Budget Provisions

Allocations in the Plan and Budget for 1989-90 reflect a balanced approach to investment and welfare :

—The allocation for the Power sector has been increased from Rs. 350 crores in 1988-89 to Rs. 460 crores in 1989-90. Adequate provisions have been made for ongoing projects such as Mettur III unit, Tuticorin expansion and the North Madras thermal project. The allocation for transmission and distribution will



enable connections to 40,000 new pumpsets and for 40,000 huts. Effective steps have been taken to expedite the North Madras thermal project which had been badly delayed on account of litigation. The Centre has been requested to appoint an expert committee to examine and resolve concerns expressed in various quarters relating to the Koodankulam nuclear project.

—Provisions have been made for a number of irrigation projects under implementation and for initiating a few new projects. The second phase of tank modernisation is being pursued. Dry land farming and water management are being given priority. A high-level Standing Irrigation Development and Water Resources Commission has been appointed. Thiru R. Tirumalai is the Chairman and its members include Thiru S.P. Namasivayam, Thiru A. Mohanakrishnan, Thiru S. Nageswaran and Thiru S. Panchanathan, who are retired Chief Engineers, Dr. V. Rajagopalan, former Vice-Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and the Chief Engineer, Irrigation. The Commission will advise the Government on an integrated approach

for the development of water resources and of irrigation in Tamil Nadu with reference to the situation in each river basin. The Chief Minister has promised to make one more attempt to settle the Cauvery dispute in discussion with the Karnataka Government. He has indicated that if this attempt fails there will be no alternative except to move the Centre to refer the dispute to a tribunal.

—Particular emphasis has been given to the revival of industrial growth in Tamil Nadu, and several steps have been taken to improve the climate for new investments in the State. The Chief Minister has held a detailed discussion with leading industrialists in the State and has addressed the Chambers of Commerce. He has assured them of easy access and all necessary help to expedite clearances at the State level and in obtaining clearances from the Centre. An official committee under the Chief Minister has been set up for expediting decisions on industrial policy and new projects in the joint sector and private sector. Several measures have been taken to promote new industries in the joint sector and incentives to industries have been liberalised. A new associate outer policy has been announced. It is proposed to establish six new growth centres for industries in Tamil Nadu.

—Urban development is another thrust area. The budget includes a provision of Rs. 111 crores for the Tamil Nadu Urban Development Project (total cost Rs. 633 crores) which will benefit Madras and 9 other cities in the State. Rs. 23 crores have been allocated for Madras city in addition to Rs. 30 crores for the Telugu-Ganga Project. Discussions are to be held soon with the Andhra Pradesh Government for expediting this project.

—The budget includes substantial provisions for meeting basic minimum needs of the people such as education, health, water supply, sanitation, housing and house-sites.

6000 villages and hamlets will be provided with drinking water supply in 1989-90 and full coverage of all villages with protected water supply will be achieved by the end of 1990-91.

45,000 houses with concrete roofs are being built for free provision to Adi-Dravidar, Scheduled Tribes and Fishermen at a cost of Rs. 49 crores in 1989-90.

2.5 lakh house-sites are expected to be assigned to poor households and 40,000 house-sites will be acquired for Scheduled Castes in 1989-90.

The Tamil Nadu Nutritious Meal Scheme, which benefits 85 lakh children, is not only being continued but is being strengthened through the provision of one egg every fortnight. The functioning of the scheme will be effectively supervised so that its benefits fully reach the children.

—The budget contains a comprehensive social security package for poor households. This includes :

Free supply of 5 kilo grams of rice on Tamil New Year's Day, Deepavali and Pongal. The free supply has been extended to two more occasions in 1989-90 viz., Anna's birthday and Kalaignar Karunanidhi's birthday on June 3 to commemorate 50 years of his life in public service.

Free supply of handloom dhoti and saree to poor households.

Old age pensions and pensions for the physically handicapped, widows and destitute women have been liberalised. The amount of pension has been increased from Rs. 35 per month to Rs. 50 per month. The ceiling on the number of pensions has been removed and the waiting list of 30,000 applications will be cleared.

An amount of Rs. 2000 will be given to families of poor households who lose their bread-winner.

The accident relief scheme, with a family benefit of Rs. 10,000 on death, has been extended to cover new categories such as drivers of cycle rickshaws, auto rickshaws, taxis and trucks and to building and construction workers.

—Large provisions have been made for generating employment :

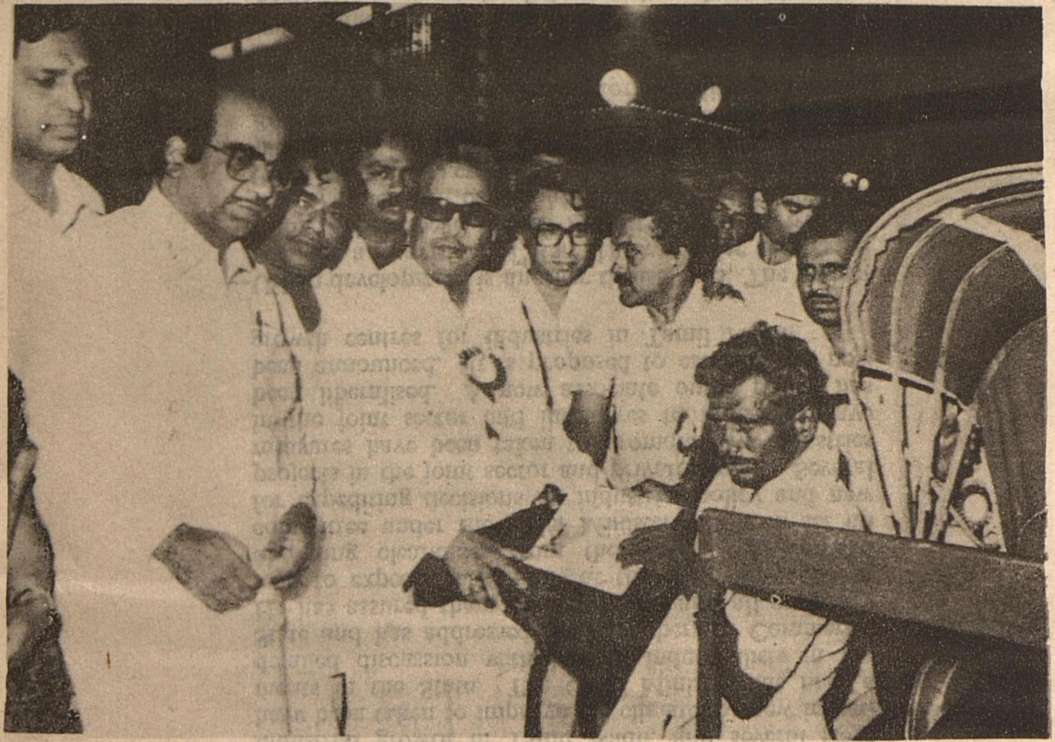
—Rs. 109 crores for rural employment schemes which will result in 600 lakh mandays of employ-

ment, i.e., a full year's employment for nearly 2 lakh persons.

—Rs. 49 crores for self-employment under IRDP including agriculture, dairying, small industries and small business to benefit 2 lakhs persons.

—Self-employment programme for urban poor under which 44,000 persons will be covered.

—Employment for 18,000 educated unemployed youth.



—A new scheme for providing employment to 25,000 educated youth in rural areas who have completed 10th class with a monthly honorarium of Rs. 200. This will be linked to constructive activities such as adult literacy, continuing education, maintenance of drinking water facilities, supervision of sanitation and other village welfare schemes.

—A similar scheme for educated unemployed in urban areas is to be announced.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTION PROMISES

The DMK party has believed that its promises to the people should be reflected in performance and what is not feasible should not be promised either. The Election Manifesto was accordingly realistic.

The Election Manifesto contained 70 promises. Some of them relate to general policies and some have to be implemented in a longer term. Apart from these, steps have been taken to implement 58 specific policies and programmes within the first hundred days. This is indeed a remarkable achievement.

The major electroral Promises that are being implemented are :

—Revival of the Legislative Council

—Increased powers to local bodies

—Debt relief to farmers

—30 per cent reservation for women in Government employment and other schemes for women's welfare

—Higher allocations for drinking water,
Adi-Dravidar housing,
Fishermen housing,
Urban development, and
Employment

—Welfare schemes included in the Budget

—Increasing the age limit for Government employment to 30 years.

—Free education up to graduate level for students belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

—Establishment of a Traders' Welfare Fund with a grant of Rs. 2 crores from Government

—Assistance for converting cycle rickshaws into motorised rickshaws and for drivers of cycle rickshaws, auto rickshaws and taxis to own their vehicles.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Reservation

The aspirations of communities recognised as Most Backward Classes, particularly the Vanniar Community, have been agitated for a long period in Tamil Nadu and had

led to serious law and order problems in 1987 and in 1988. Neither the AIADMK Government nor the administration under President's rule were able to find a solution to this problem.

The new Government have examined the issue of reservations in all its aspects and have announced their policy within 50 days of assuming office. Under the new policy 50 per cent of the reservation for Backward Classes has been apportioned on the basis of 20 per cent for Most Backward Classes and Denotified Communities and 30 per cent for other Backward Classes. The 18 per cent reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as well as the 32 per cent avilable to all classes under open competition have been maintained.

Government have established a separate Directorate to implement schemes for the educational, social and economic advancement of Most Backward Classes and Denotified Communities.

The new reservation policy has been widely welcomed within and outside the State. The Chief Minister has indicated that he has an open mind on whether it needs any further revision on the basis of actual experience.

Communal Harmony

The DMK was formed not to contest elections; it was formed only as a social reform movement....To seek and obtain social harmony between all sections will be our first priority.

Chief Minister,
Interview to Indian Express,
6-1-1989.

Among all the States in India, Tamil Nadu has been relatively free of communal disturbances but in recent years tensions have been created by RSS activity. Intervening in debates in the Legislative Assembly on communal incidents in Salem, Kanniyakumari, and Coimbatore districts, the Chief Minister has indicated the Government's firm resolve to maintain good relations among all communities.

Status of Women

The new Government is committed to securing the dignity and development of women. Several far reaching steps have been taken to implement this objective :

—30 per cent of employment opportunities in Government offices, public sector corporations and local bodies have been reserved for women. Only women teachers are to be appointed hereafter to I and II standards in schools.

—Legislation has been introduced to amend the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 in order to provide equal rights for female children in ancestral property.

—Free education is to be provided up to graduate level for girls coming from poor and middle class families.

—A marriage grant of Rs. 5,000 has been announced for girls from poor households who have completed 8th standard and above.

—Maternity relief of Rs. 200 has been announced for working women from poor households who lose earnings at the time of pregnancy and child birth.

CENTRE—STATE RELATIONS

The DMK Government has throughout pursued a steadfast policy of being firm in regard to the autonomy of States while extending constructive co-operation, wherever appropriate, to the Centre. This policy has been reiterated in the Election Manifesto, Governor's Address and Budget Speech. In particular, the Government has repeated its firm resolve to oppose any effort to impose Hindi against the wishes of the people of Tamil Nadu and to press for English being retained as an official language until all 15 languages, which find a place in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, are treated as official languages.

Chief Ministers' Conference

Every opportunity has been taken, since the new Government assumed office, to project its stand on Centre-State relations and to press for the fulfilment of Tamil Nadu's legitimate demands on the Centre. The Chief Minister, while participating in the Conference of Chief Ministers held in New Delhi in February 1989, explained his stand on various Centre-State fiscal issues such as our opposition to the replacement of sales tax by additional excise duties and the need for early introduction of consignment tax. He has underlined the need to initiate a comprehensive discussion on Centre-State relations in the legislative, administrative and financial spheres and for an Inter-State Council to be expeditiously

established under Article 263 of the Constitution for this purpose. He has also urged that the Prime Minister should discuss the structure and procedures for such a Council with the Chief Ministers.

Ninth Finance Commission

Detailed discussions were held with the Ninth Finance Commission in February 1989. On this occasion, the Chief Minister explained our stand on several issues relating to financial transfers from the Centre to States and to the sharing of such transfers among the States. Within this framework, he set forth the need to accommodate special problems affecting Tamil Nadu such as urban development, school buildings and upgradation of judicial administration. In particular, he conveyed our disappointment at the report of the Ninth Finance Commission for 1989-90 in neglecting the claims of Madras City while providing a grant of Rs. 50 crores each to Calcutta and Bombay for slum improvement. He has urged that a similar grant should be made for Madras at least in the final report.

Projects for Tamil Nadu

The claims of Tamil Nadu have also been taken to the notice of Prime Minister and Central Ministers during the Chief Minister's visits to New Delhi in February and March 1989. The major projects for which we have sought early implementation or clearance include :

—Neyveli III mine cut

—Cauvery delta modernisation

—Expediting Karur-Dindigul broad gauge line

—Adequate allocations for Madras City Rapid Transport System

—Upgrading the highway between Cuddalore and Kanniyakumari

—Royalty/profit sharing from the Neyveli Lignite Corporation

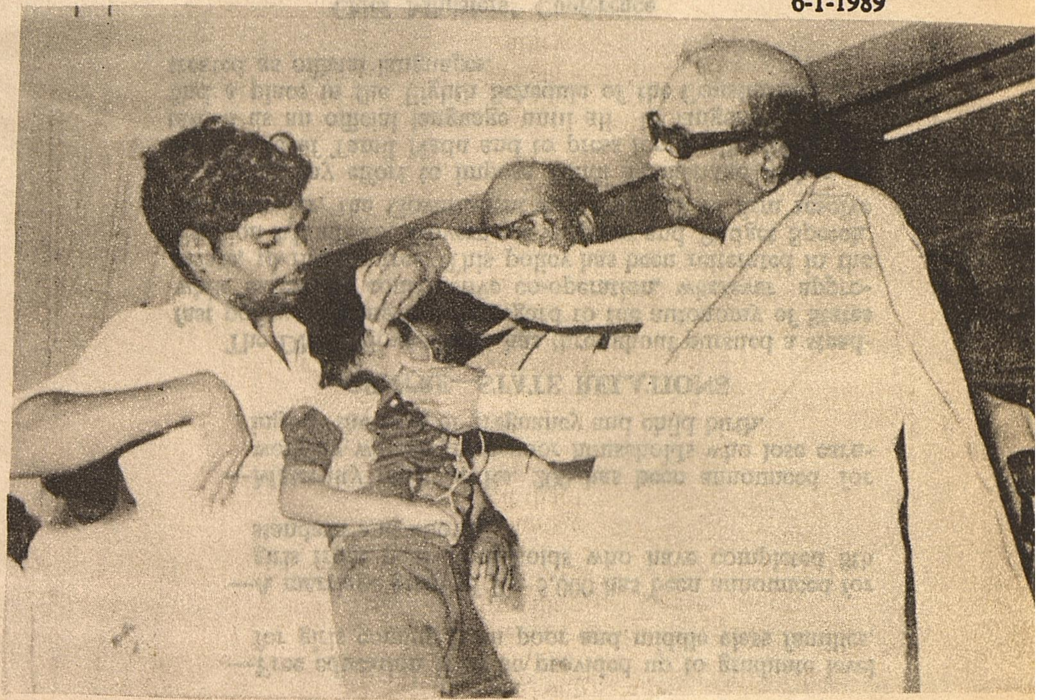
Sri Lanka

On the Sri Lanka issue, the Chief Minister has kept himself fully briefed. He has had four meetings on the subject with the Prime Minister in addition to briefings by the Minister of State for External Affairs. He has also had discussions with Thiru Varadaraja Perumal, Thiru Thondaman and Gen. A.S. Kalkat. He has pointed out that the restoration of peace and harmony in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka has the highest priority at the present stage and that this would be possible only through a political solution involving all interested parties including the LTTE.

Administrative Reform

There is stagnation everywhere. During the last 10 years the clock has been set back. Putting the administration on the rails will be our top priority.

—Chief Minister,
Interview to Indian Express
6-1-1989



First the administration has to be streamlined and made efficient.

—Chief Minister,
Interview to Hindu,
26-1-1989.

Several concrete steps have been taken to provide the State with a clean, responsive, and efficient administration.

Decentralisation

Decentralisation constitutes the major thrust for improving the delivery of benefits to the people at the grass roots level. Although Tamil Nadu had been a pioneer, during the Kamaraj administration, in implementing the comprehensive legislation for strengthening Panchayats and Panchayat Unions, the scope and substance of decentralisation had come to be drastically diluted since 1976. Panchayat Unions were superceded under President's rule in 1977 and Panchayats were superceded in 1979. Since 1970, elections to these bodies were held only in 1986 after a long interval of 16 years. In the meanwhile, Panchayats and Panchayat Unions were deprived of many of their powers, responsibilities, and privileges. Several local schemes of the Government were also directly implemented without giving local institutions any role in them.

On the tenth day of assuming office, the new Government convened a Conference in Madras of the Chairmen of all the 384 Panchayat Unions and 98 Municipalities in the State. On this occasion, the Government's policy not only to restore the powers taken away from local bodies, but also to equip them with additional powers and resources was announced. A number of concrete steps have been taken since then to fulfil this promise :

—Elections are to be held soon on the basis of the voting age of 18 years, to the Corporations of Madras, Madurai, and Coimbatore.

—The tenure of the Chairmen and Members of these Panchayat Unions and of the Chairmen and Members of the Municipalities, which was curtailed to 3 years, has been extended to 5 years.

—Panchayat Unions and Panchayats have been given powers for supervision in respect of several schemes and activities such as noon meals, elementary education, school buildings, health sub-centres, agricultural input distribution, agricultural extension, drinking water supply, and sanitation.

—Panchayat Unions and Panchayats have been made responsible for the identification of beneficiaries under IRDP, NREP, RLEGP, social forestry and other anti-poverty programmes.

—Training programmes have been organised for Panchayat Union presidents.

—Finance Corporations will be established to provide financial assistance to Municipalities, Panchayat Unions and Panchayats.

Village Administration

Along with local bodies, village administration provides the Government's link with the people at the grass roots. In 1982, the traditional system of village officers was abolished and they were replaced by village administrative officers for groups of villages. As a result, the rural population has been greatly inconvenienced in having their claims and grievances attended to and village accounts are not being properly maintained. It is also widely felt that the new system has led to an increase in corruption.

The Election Manifesto had therefore announced that the question of reviving the old system of resident village officers would be examined without prejudice to the village administrative officers who had already been appointed. In pursuance of this promise, a Committee has been appointed under the Chairmanship of Thiru K. Lakshmikanthan Bharathi to suggest improvements to village administration within three months. Its members include the Revenue Secretary and Joint Commissioner (Revenue Administration).

Cooperatives

Elections have not been held to cooperative societies at the primary, district and Central levels since 1975. During President's rule, an announcement was made that elections to cooperatives will be held at an early date in 1988 but it was not implemented. The new Government has decided to hold elections to cooperatives as soon as possible in the current year.

Temple Administration

The Chief Minister held a detailed discussion with Heads of Hindu religious institutions. Following these discussions, a Committee has been appointed to recommend comprehensive measures for reforms to temple administration. The Committee consists of Thiru Kundrakudi Adigalar, Thiru Justice N. Krishnaswami Reddiar, Thiru Thiruvarangam Thirumalai Ayyangar, Thiru Senthilnathan, Thirumathi Radha Thiagarajan and the Secretary for Hindu Religious and Chari-

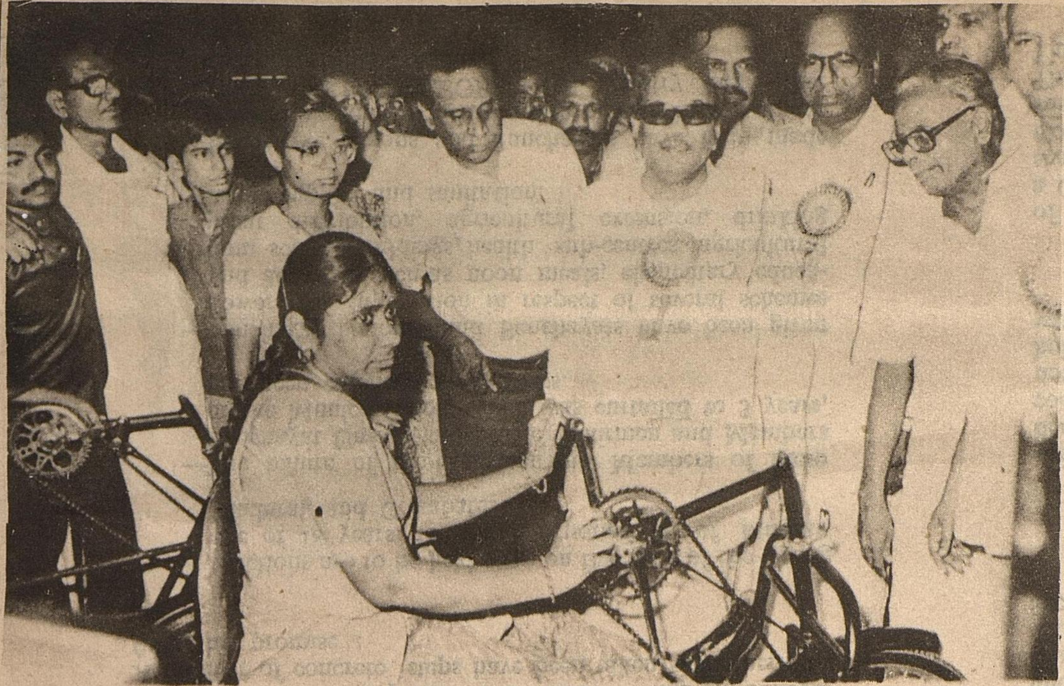


table Endowments. This high-evel Committee has been requested to submit its report within three months.

Hospital Administration.

Several complaints have been received about the functioning of hospitals in the State. Medical education is another priority. Government have appointed a Medical Education and Hospital Improvement Advisory Committee with Dr. B. Ramamurthy as Chairman. Its Members include Dr. A. Venugopal, Dr. Sam Moses and the Health Secretary. The Committee has been requested to submit its report within three months.

Depoliticised Administration

Within 10 days of taking office, the Chief Minister announced that all except one or two public sector corporations and committees will be hereafter headed only by officials.

11 public sector corporations/committees were wound up as being no longer necessary. 41 posts of Chief Executives, held in the past by non-officials were retrenched resulting in an economy of Rs. 45 lakhs per annum.

Public Distribution System

Despite several representations from the new Government, the Centre has reduced the monthly allotment of rice from the Central pool from 80,000 tonnes in November 1988-January 1989 to 40,000 tonnes since February 1989. To meet the situation, the new Government has been going ahead with an ambitious procurement target of about 18 lakh tonnes of paddy in the current year. Adequate supplies are being maintained throughout the public distribution system. Steps have been taken to weed out bogus ration cards and to streamline the ration card system. The issue price has been maintained despite the increase in the price of rice from Rs. 2.79 per kilo to Rs. 3.25 imposed by the Centre in February 1989.

Illicit Liquor

Illicit distillation of liquor is a widespread problem. The new Government has taken a number of steps to root out evil through raids, seizures and arrests and has not hesitated to take disciplinary action against erring police officers.

Efficient and Responsive Administration

In the first hundred days of the new Government the Cabinet has held as many as 8 meetings and taken decisions on a number of important issues. The Standing Finance Committee has met for three full days.

The Chief Minister has placed considerable emphasis on making the administration more responsive in meeting the demands and grievances of the people at all levels. In this connection, he has given the following assurance in the Budget Speech :

"The administration would be streamlined from top to bottom. Government offices at the Collectorate and Taluk levels will be modernised. Decisions will be expedited on representations from the public. Arrangements will be made to ensure that benefits announced by the Government are reached to the people in an easy and expeditious manner. For this purpose we shall make the people aware of what they need to do and what they can expect from the officials in a time-bound manner in order to obtain benefits assured to them. This will be done through notices, meetings in which the people participate and through brochures. These measures will enable all to understand who are eligible to obtain benefits and to prevent sections of those who are not

eligible from capturing them."

—The Chief Minister himself has been directly receiving hundreds of petitions every day. About 3 lakh petitions have been received in his Secretariat. These are being expeditiously processed in consultation with concerned departments and the final disposal is intimated to the parties.

—Detailed discussions have been held with Collectors and Police Officials at their Conference held on 15 and 16 April and they have been instructed to give immediate attention to drought relief, employment programmes, public distribution system, disposal of public grievances, checking illicit distillation and maintenance of communal harmony.

—The Chief Minister and Ministers have undertaken surprise inspections of noon meal centres, hospitals, health centres, schools, ration shops, taluk offices, etc. Action has been taken against erring officials and procedures are being improved so that there is no recurrence of irregularities.

—On the occasion of the 20th death anniversary of of Perarignar Anna, the Government gave remission to certain classes of prisoners. 843 prisoners including 71 women have been benefitted from the amnesty.

—Cases instituted for political reasons have been withdrawn.

—'Suspision Cases' will no longer be instituted.

—The Government have pursued an enlightened labour policy. Three closed textile mills have been reopened and steps are being taken to reopen other closed factories. An interim relief of Rs. 250 per worker has been provided to those affected by closure. About 500 workers belonging to the Madhavaram dairy, who were victimised in 1980, have been taken back into employment. Major labour disputes, such as those relating to the Metal Box Company have been resolved. Minimum wages have been announced for agricultural labourers and beedi workers. The Chief Minister has expressed his support in principle to the raising of minimum bonus to 12 per cent.

—Longstanding aspirations of the local people have been met in renaming districts. The erstwhile Chengalpattu district has been renamed as Chengai Anna, the erstwhile Anna District has been renamed as Dindigul-Quaid-E-Milleth, the erstwhile Pasumpon Muthuramalingam District has been renamed as Pasumpon Thevar Thirumagan.

It had been announced by the Government that the new District to be created would be named after Ambedkar. Accordingly the North Arcot District is bifurcated into two and named as 'Thiruvannamalai Sambuvarayar District' with its headquarters at Thiruvannamalai and 'Vellore Ambedkar District' with its headquarters at Vellore.

Relations with Employees

The Government has shown in several ways its concern for meeting the demands of its employees and for rendering justice to them :

—Parity in pay scales for State Government employees with Central employees has been accepted in principle. The Government has undertaken to obtain the report of the Fifth Tamil Nadu Pay Commission and announce decisions by the end of May 1989 with retrospective effect from 1st June 1988.

—UGC scales for University and College teachers have been implemented with effect from February 1989 and provision for arrears due from 1st January 1986.

—A Police Commission is to be established.

—More than 2 lakh employees in the Tamil Nadu Government Nutritious Meals Programme have so far been treated as temporary employees. They have now been made permanent part-time employees of local bodies.

—Disciplinary actions taken in the past have been reexamined and victimisation has been rectified in many cases such as those relating to Secretariat employees, other Government employees, teachers and policemen.

EXPOSURE OF CORRUPTION

The exposure of corruption, favouritism and misuse of power is an essential step in providing a clean administration for the future. The new Government has taken pains to expose and to eliminate major avenues for corruption.

Liquor

The Governor's Address indicated that "in the past, the rules under the Prohibition Act have been changed several times conferring several benefits to the distillers. This has resulted in heavy loss to the exchequer running to several crores of rupees legitimately due to the State." In this context, the Government announced its intention to bring forward legislation and amendments to the rules to prevent this loss and to augment the State's revenues.

This indication was quickly followed up with measures that were announced during the Chief Minister's reply to the debate in the Legislative Assembly on the Governor's Address on 17 February. Excise duties and other levies relating to Indian Made Foreign Spirits (IMFS) at different stages of production and distribution were reviewed and refixed. Powers have been given to the Commissioner for Excise and Prohibition to determine the prices at which TASMAC purchases and sells IMFS. Retail shops will henceforth be permitted on auction basis instead of at the low licence fee that had been charged hitherto. As a result of these far-reaching measures, additional resources of Rs. 100 crores, which had provided a source for corruption in the past, have been captured for the exchequer.

Transactions in Land

Several transactions relating to the disposal of valuable lands at low prices and to the granting of allotments and exemptions relating to plots and buildings have been brought to light and cancelled. These include :

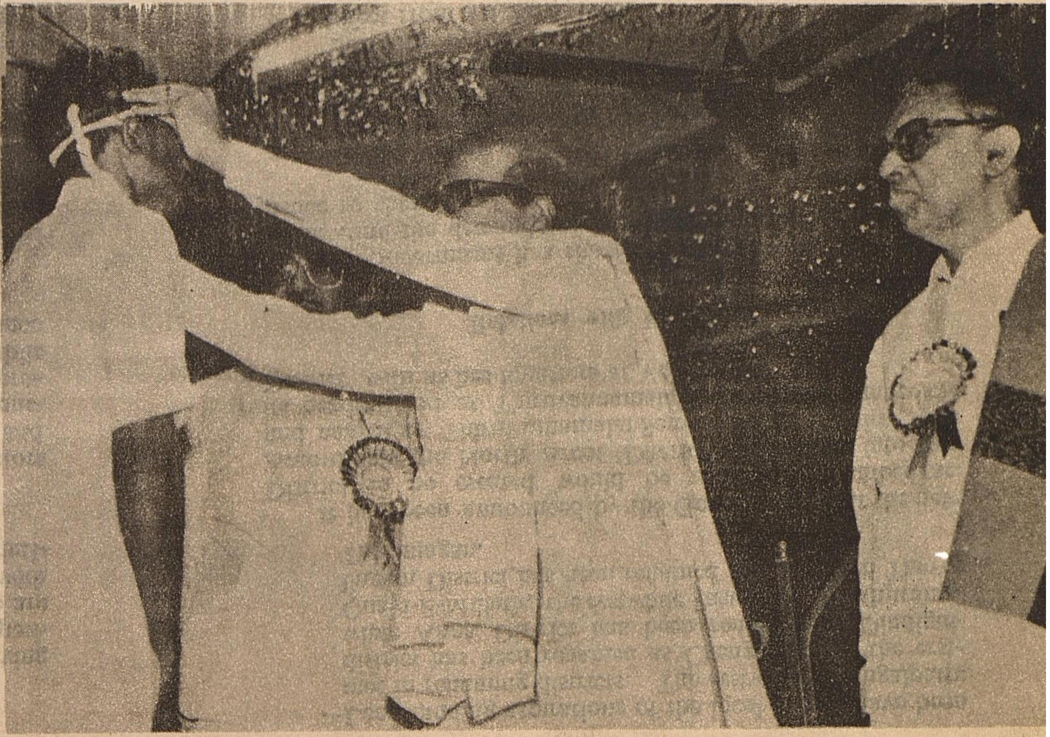
—The resumption of 324 grounds of land around the old Madras zoo which had been assigned at a low value of Rs. 1.76 crores to Pallava Hotels Corporation promoted by a non-resident investor (NRI). The true value of these lands is Rs. 40 crores.

—83 grounds of land near Valluvar Kottam, 50 acres in Muthukkadu, and 299 acres belonging to a temple in Thiruvidanthai have been resumed. These lands, with an estimated value of Rs. 7.5 crores had been allotted to a NRI by the AIADMK Government without following proper procedures and at low valuation.

—The AIADMK Government had also entered into an agreement with an NRI promoter whereby they had transferred the management of the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation Hotel at Mahabalipuram for a nominal lease rent. The agreement has now been cancelled and the TTDC has resumed the management of the Hotel.

—The Government has brought to light 181 artistrary exemptions from planning permission orders issued by MMDA. The exemptions have been issued overruling the objections of the MMDA and the Housing Department in the Secretariat by Ministers of the AIADMK Government between 21st October 1986 and 29th January 1988. Notice has been given to cancel these exemptions and an enquiry has been ordered on the circumstances under which they were granted.

—The AIADMK Government had transferred 240 plots covering an extent of 302 grounds in Anna Nagar, Kalaignar Karunanidhi Nagar, Besant Nagar and Indira Nagar by converting such plots to private use from public purposes such as hospitals, dispensaries, schools and parks and had allotted them on a discre-



tionary basis to various individuals. The market value of these plots has been estimated at Rs. 13 crores. Notice has been given to cancel these allotments with a view to resuming the plots for public purposes.

Transport Legislation

The Supreme Court, in its judgement of February 1987, had held that private bus operators cannot run their buses on notified routes or on routes which overlap with notified routes under schemes for nationalisation of passenger transport. Subsequent to this judgement, the AIADMK Government passed the Tamil Nadu Motor Vehicles (Special Provisions) Bill, 1987 in order to provide for the grant of new and renewal permits to private bus operators in routes covered by nationalisation schemes. The assent of the President for the Bill was received in March 1989. The policy of nationalisation would have been effectively diluted if this Bill had been given effect to. The new Government have therefore decided not to

publish the Bill and, by doing so, have ensured that the policy of nationalisation is not frustrated.

Self-financing Colleges

In the last few years, a number of private self-financing colleges which demand capitation fees had been allowed. Besides extracting large amounts from students, these colleges lack adequate facilities and the quality of education provided is poor. The Government have decided that private self-financing colleges will not be approved in future. They have also decided to examine the functioning of all such institutions, which are in existence at present, and to take necessary action to remedy the situation.

TAMIN

Under-invoicing of granite exports and other irregularities relating to the exploitation, processing and export of granite by the Tamil Nadu Mineral Corporation (TAMIN) resulting in an estimated loss of Rs. 10 crores have been brought to light. Steps have been taken to fix responsibility and to reorganise the functioning of this Corporation.

THE CENTRAL DROUGHT TEAM VISITS TAMIL NADU

The Central Drought team which inspected the drought conditions and the relief operations in Tamil Nadu for two days on 11th and 12th May 1989 has commended the Tamil Nadu Government's efforts for mitigating the sufferings of the people.

The seven members of the team, which visited the Tamil Nadu, divided themselves into three groups. The team toured all the 12 affected districts and returned to Madras on 13th May 1989. They had a discussion with the Chief Secretary Thiru M.M. Rajendran, IAS, the Revenue Secretary, Thiru A.M. Swaminathan, IAS, the Finance Secretary Thiru N. Narayanan, IAS and other senior officers of the Tamil Nadu Government at the Secretariat.

Later they called on the Chief Minister, Dr. M. Karunanidhi. They also visited the city's drinking water sources before going to Delhi.

The Team Leader, Thiru Vishnu Bhagavan who met the press, told that in all the affected districts, besides considerable loss of crops, the irrigation tanks had all dried up and the drinking water problem was quite acute. Even in the deep-borewells, there was inadequate water.

Another serious problem was to make jobs available for the rural people so that they could have money to buy their daily needs.

On both fronts, Thiru Bhagavan said, the Tamil Nadu Government had acted at the right time and released the funds for schemes to provide drinking water and generate employment through road and tank works. "wherever we went we saw the schemes being implemented: women formed half of the work force and majority of the beneficiaries belonged to the weaker sections". The workers who were paid a daily wage of Rs.10 in cash and kind, appeared happy.

In all the districts, the Collectors were in charge of relief operations.

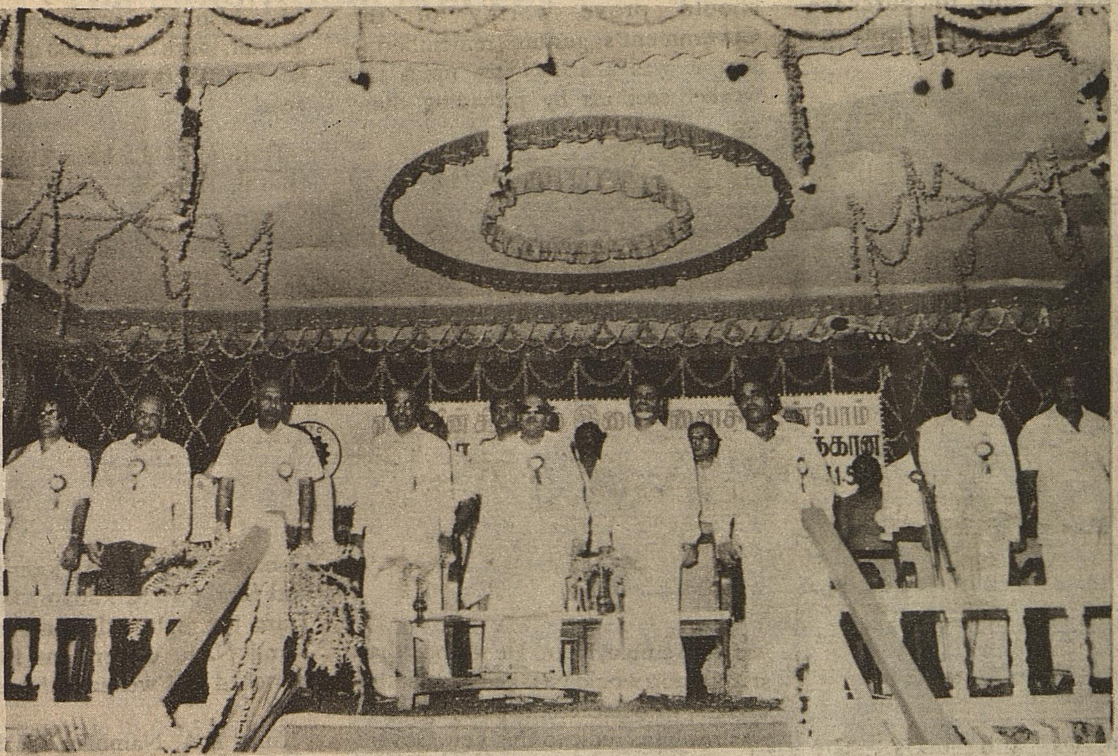
The collectors told the team members that there was no paucity of funds for relief work and more employment generation schemes would be taken up shortly.

Thiru Bhagavan himself visited the worst-affected areas such as Ramanathapuram, Pasumpon Thevar Thirumagan and Kamarajar districts and saw pesonally the relief works and there were no complaints about jobs and security of food. The team would submit its report to the Centre, within a week. Thereafter the process was not very long.

The Chief Minister appreciated the Centre's gesture for having sent the study team almost immediately on receipt of the State Government's memorandum. Due to urgency, the Chief Minister had asked the Chief Secretary to take the report to Delhi; the Revenue Minister, Thiru Nanjil K. Manoharan also met the concerned authorities in Delhi and explained the situation. The Chief Minister thanked the Centre for deputing the team immediately and expressed his hope that with the same speed the assistance will also come.

The Tamil Nadu Government has proposed relief works involving an outlay of Rs.222 crores and sought liberal assistance from Central Government to implement them. Of the normal paddy area of 24 lakh hectares, the coverage of this season was only 18.9 lakh hectares, in respect of millets the coverage was 13.34 lakh hectars. A sizeable portion of the cropped area has been damaged because of the drought, which has hit nearly 10,000 of the State's 17,300 villages.

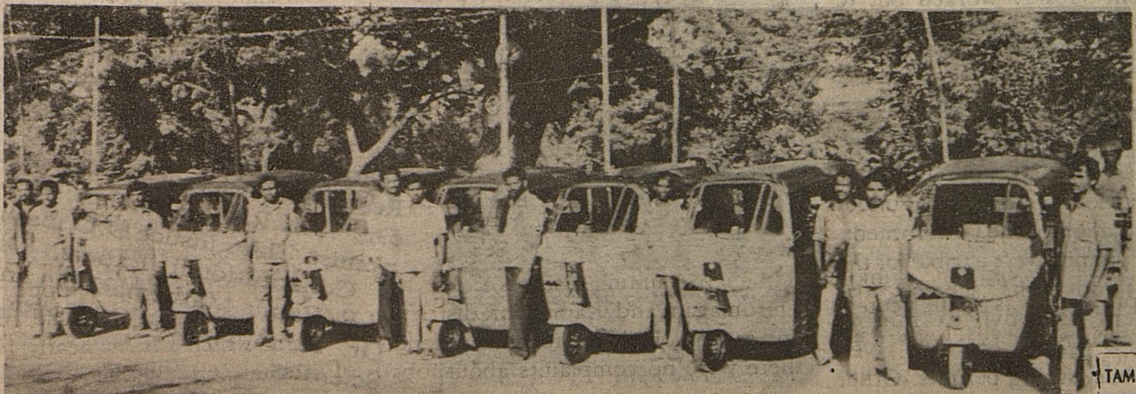
MAY DAY GIFT FOR AUTO, RICKSHAW DRIVERS



To make Drivers of Cycle-rickshaws, Auto-rickshaws and Taxis, the owners of the vehicles, the Chief Minister, Dr. M. Karunanidhi, on Ist May 1989 launched a new scheme - a scheme that is being implemented on the basis of Government subsidy and low interest loans through the Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC). As a result of this scheme 25,000 persons will be benefitted.

The Chief Minister handed over a few vehicles and the sanction orders to beneficiaries at a function held in the open space in front of the Rajaji Hall. He said that by launching this scheme, the Government had actually translated into reality another of its election promises. He also said that premits for autorickshaws could be obtained by paying a fee of Rs.500. but in practice it was not so because of a few individuals who got all the permits and were selling them for as much as Rs.23,000 including the cost of the vehicle, a person might have to spend anything like Rs.62.000 to own an autorickshaw. This was the reason, why the passengers are mercilessly fleeced by autorickshaw man. The drivers demand extra money from passengers in order to take back their investment. The Goverment was determined to put an end to such evil practices hereafter.

He said that as many as 6.000 cycle rickshaws were on the roads without licence. It has now been decided to grant licences to all such unlicenced cycle rickshaws at a date which will be notified soon. However, he said that no new cycle rickshaws would be permitted and for regularising and issuing licences to the existing cyclerickshaws. Ist May 1989 would be taken as the cut-off date.



The Chief Minister explained in detail that under the above scheme launched on Ist May 1989 assistance was given to fix motors in the cyclerickshaws and to purchase motorised new cyclerickshaws,

autorickshaws and taxis. The beneficiary's contribution for fixing the motor costing Rs.4,000 in the cyclerickshaw was only Rs.500. The Government gave a subsidy of Rs.1,500 and the rest came as loan from TIIC, carrying a 14.5 percent interest. The Government provided an interest subsidy of seven per cent. To Adi-Dravidars and to those who repaid the loan an additional two per cent subsidy was given. Similarly, for cyclerickshaws, the Government subsidy was Rs.2,850.

In all, 293 persons including 210 Adi-Dravidars were given the assistance, totalling Rs.50.16 lakhs. Of this, Government subsidy worked out tc Rs.7.79 lakhs and the beneficiaries contribution was Rs.5.75 lakhs.

The Transport Minister Thiru M.M. Kannappan, presided over the function. He said that a proposal to issue more cyclerickshaw permits was under the consideration of the Government. Only valid permits were eligible for the assistance under the scheme. the Government is now examining whether new permits could be given liberally while issuing permits. Other traffic congestion would also be taken into account and suitable action would be initiated to manage the extra traffic. He said that the beneficiaries should prove worthy of the Government's gesture remembering that it was a scheme to uplift the weaker sections by providing them with self-employment. He warned that stern action would be taken against the drivers, who fleeced the passengers. It was really a credit to this new Goverment that in just 93 days of its coming to power, it had been implementing a new scheme or a programme almost each and every day.

Thiru M.M. Rajendran, I.A.S., the Chief Secretary to the Tamil Nadu Government requested the beneficiaries to pay back the loan promptly so that the money could be used to help more and more people. As a result, more than 1,000 drivers would be benefitted from the scheme this year.

Thiru Abdul Latheef, Thiru Elamvazhuthi, Thiru R.S. Sridhar, Thiru N. Ganapathy, Thiru A. Rahman Khan and Mrs. S.P. Sarkunam, MLAS and Thiru T.R. Balu, MP Commended the Tamil Nadu Goverment for having launched this welfare scheme.

Thiru K.A. Nambiar, I.A.S., Commissioner and Secretary, Industries Department, welcomed the gathering. He explained the features of the scheme. Thiru A.P. Bhatikar, Managing Director of TIIC, proposed a vote of thanks.

M.S. SUBBULAKSHMI MADE NATIONAL RESEARCH PROFESSOR

Tmt. M.S. Subbulakshmi, the Carnatic music exponent has now been appointed as National Research Professor for five years.

The scheme of National Research Professorship was instituted in the year 1949 to honour distinguished academics and scholars. Persons who have been honoured as National Research Professor so far are: Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao, an Economist, Thiru Justice D.D. Basu, a Constitutional Expert, Dr. C.R. Rao, a Mathematician and Dr. A. Appadorai, a Political Scientist.

Rs.15 crores rebate planned for Handloom Cooperatives

The Chief Minister, Dr. M. Karunanidhi, said that the Tamil Nadu Government has proposed to give Rs.15 crores rebate to the Handloom Cooperatives in the State this year, 1989.

Speaking at the valedictory function of the Handloom Exhibition, held at the Cooptex grounds in Egmore, the Chief Minister Dr. M. Karunanidhi at the outset said that the Government was keen on settling the rebate arrears of Rs.26 crores due to the societies. Already Rs.15 crores had been paid and the balance would be cleared very soon.

The Chief Minister also announced that the Government would soon set up a 'Design Centre' at a cost of Rs.50 lakhs for the benefit of weavers. Two Handloom Emporiums, one each in Erode and Kancheepuram, would also be opened soon. He said as against his announcement in the budget to provide employment to 1,000 women weavers, about 5,000 women weavers would be given jobs.

He said about 40 to 50 lakh people were dependent, on the handloom sector and the Government would take all possible steps to improve their welfare. As a first step the Government had instructed that cotton yarn would be supplied first to the co-operative societies, then to other private handlooms and lastly to the mills.

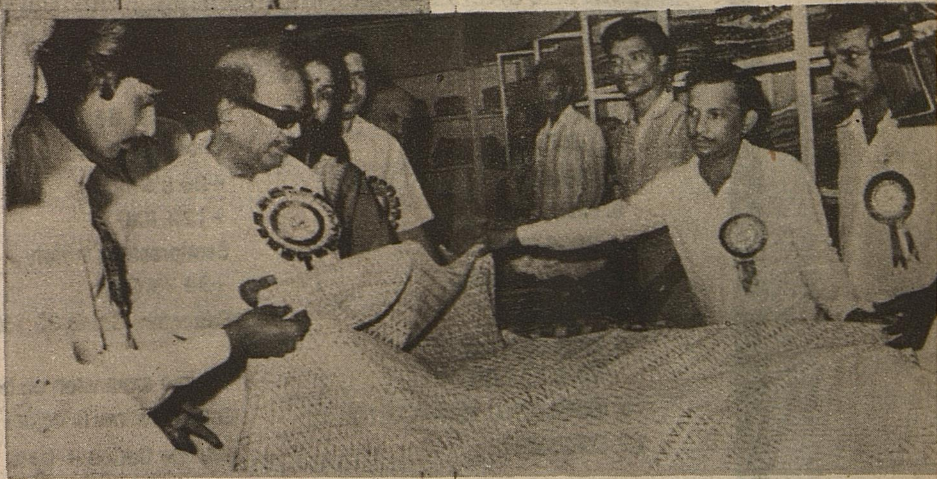
Hon'ble Minister for Handlooms, Thiru S. Thangavelu presided over the function. Sales this year at the exhibition was Rs.3.25 crores against Rs.2.20 crores last year. In the other 16 cities the total sales in the State was Rs.25 crores in 1989 against Rs.20.47 crores in 1988.

The 18 co-operative spinning mills in the State were running under loss, which had aggregated to Rs.35.79 crores, due to administrative lapses and other reasons. The defects in their working would be rectified and the mills would be made to gain profits.

Dr. A. Kalanidhi, MP said the shortage of cotton yarn was mainly due to the wrong export policy. The export of cotton yarn would be prohibited so that the weavers could get it without any difficulty. The rebate period which was 90 days, some thirteen years back, had been reduced to 30 days. He said the 90 day period should be restored. The sericulture industry, which had been neglected so far should be given its due importance.

Thiru Kumari Anandan, MLA appealed to the Chief Minister to abolish the two per cent sales tax on cotton yarn.

Thiru Murasoli Maran, MP, and Thiru Venkatesa Dikshitar, MLA said that the scheme of "Free distribution of a Saree and a Dhoti" to the families below the poverty line during festivals, as announced by the Hon'ble Chief Minister would definitely help the handloom co-operatives to clear the accumulated goods. It would also provide continuous employment to weavers.



The Chief Minister distributed shields to various co-operative societies in recognition of their performance and presented prizes to those who had excelled in the exports.

Thiru K. Kirubakaran, IAS, Secretary, Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles, and Khadi Department, and Thiru R.S. Panda, IAS, Director of Handlooms, spoke on the occasion.

Tmt. Jayanthi, IAS, Special Officer, Co-optex, welcomed the gathering. Thiru S.S. Perumal, Member, Festival Celebration Committee proposed a vote of thanks.

TAMIN

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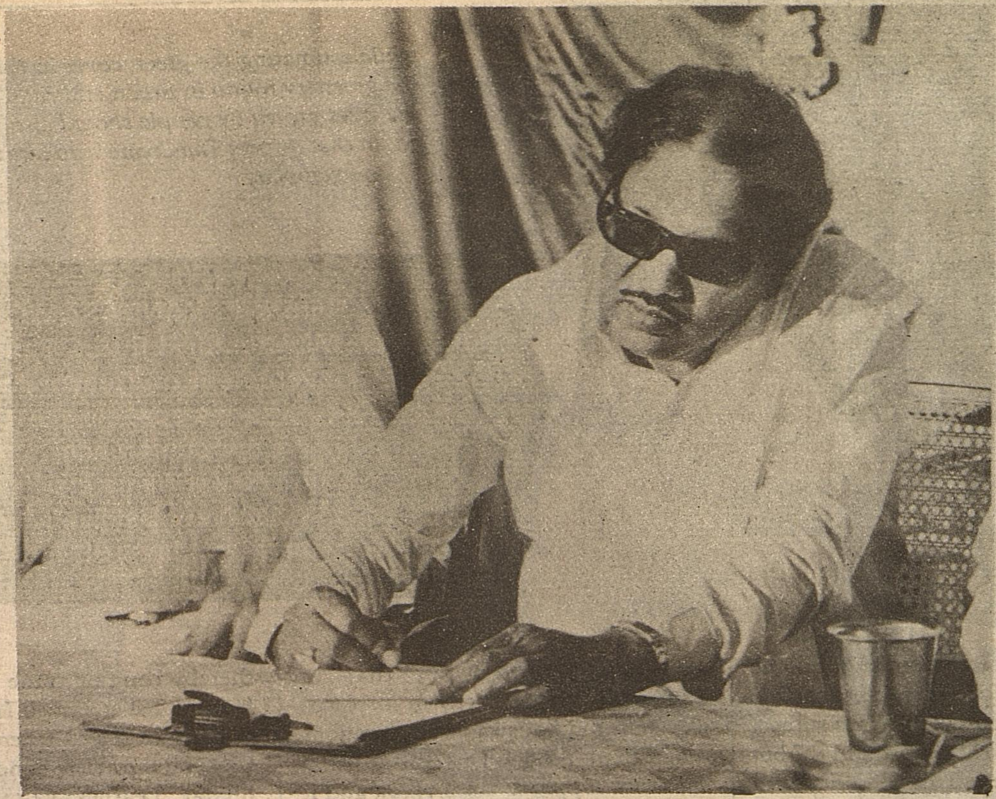


(Following is a free English prose rendering of one of the exquisite verses of **Dr. M. Karunanidhi.** Even his prose writings are noted for their pictorial quality and poesy.)

Fame Thou art mysterious!

Fame!

Thou art a Moon.

Many a Scholar tried but succeeded not in their attempt to possess you.

Fame!

Thou art the summit of the Himalayas. By perseverance a few reach you.

Fame!

Thou art an ice cube.

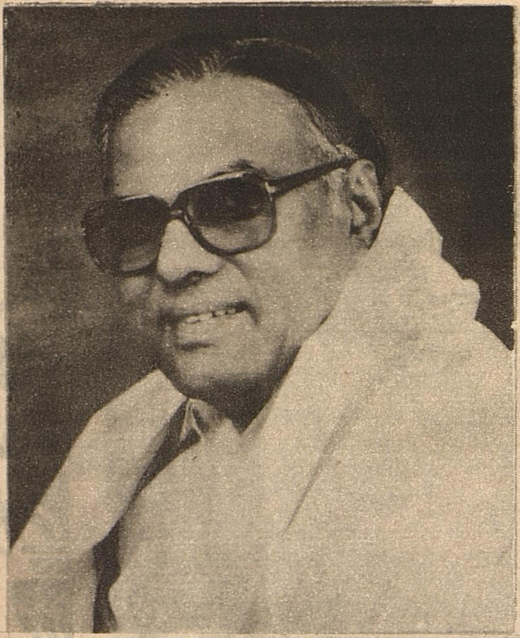
You will foil the attempt of anyone to hold you in the palm of his hand and will melt into water and disappear altogether.

Fame!

Thou art a puzzle!

You are inexplicable!

Translation: **Ilandevan**



> *while estimating the green cover in the country, the greenery found in urban and rural areas and the trees grown by people should also be included. In that respect Tamilnadu's image can be said to be exemplary.*

Thiru K.P. KANDASAMY,
Honourable Minister for H.R. & C.E. and Forests,
Government of Tamilnadu
in his speech
in the conference
of Forest Ministers
at New Delhi
on 11th May 1989.

The Honourable Minister at the outset welcomed the forest policy. The Minister pointed out that the subject forest was in the State List till 1977 but this was transferred to the Concurrent List at the instance of Government of India without consulting the State Governments. The Minister admitted that there is need for uniformity in matters connected with forestry but it should not be treated as a subject in the Union List.

In a like manner, while making amendments to the Forest Conservation Act also, Government of India has not consulted the State Governments. Therefore the Minister pleaded that the States should be consulted in future in all important matters including such amendments.

While dealing with requirement of wood based industries, the Minister pointed out that there should be a balance struck between the needs of industry and the requirements of forestry. He pointed out that while estimating the green cover in the country, the greenery found in urban and rural areas and the trees grown by people should also be included. In that respect Tamilnadu's image can be said to be exemplary. He cited the urban developments in Soviet Russia and pointed out that while developing New towns and cities, Avenue trees are also planted.

He also pointed out that in Tamilnadu Wattle is grown in places like Ooty and Kodaikanal on elevations more than 6000′. This is the only source of supply of tannin bark and it cannot be given up.

Likewise paper is also very much required because literacy rate is also going up in our country. Unless paper industry is able to develop alternate sources of supply, wood supply from department cannot be stopped. In this connection, he also mentioned that it would be too much, asking for the industries to grow trees in private and patta lands. He again mentioned that the Tamilnadu Government has started a plantation corporation which has 70,000 to 80,000 acres for raising industrial plantations.

In this connection, he mentioned that Research for raising productivity should be conducted. He mentioned to the Honourable Union Minister for a question raised by the latter, that the price of wood has recently been increased keeping in view the market price.

Wild Life Act of 1972:

He was very critical of the implementation of Wildlife Act of 1972. He pointed out that the reptiles which was included in Schedule IV has been unnecessarily transferred to Schedule II thereby banning trade in snake skin. He said that atleast 30 Thousand snake skins were seized recently in Madras City and they were handed over to the Bharat Leather Corporation. The Wildlife Act has deprived the income of the trade and seriously affected the livelihood of tribals who make their living on snake catching. In this context, he pleaded very earnestly, for the appointment of the Expert Committee to go into all the problems and suggested the lifting of the ban immediately.

The Minister said that a fraction of sandalwood is smuggled out of State. The reason for this continuing problem is that only in Karnataka and Tamilnadu, keeping more than 5 Kg. of sandalwood is an offence. He made it clear, that processing and transporting sandalwood in places other than the States of Karnataka and Tamilnadu is not an offence. Therefore he suggested *the enactment* of a *uniform legislation* for the possession and trading in Sandalwood.

He also recalled the meeting with Union Minister about a month ago and pointed out his discussion regarding export of Sandalwood. He suggested that atleast one-third of the chipped wood should be allowed to be exported. He pleaded for the restoration of 200 gms. instead of 50 gms. in the size of chips for export.

He thanked all the participants and concluded his speech.

The Golden-Jubilee of the Tamil Nadu Assembly

The Golden Jubilee of the Tamil Nadu Assembly was celebrated in a grand and impressive manner on 5th May 1989 at the Assembly Chamber in Fort St. George. The House was beautifully decorated and special illuminations were made. The Speaker of the Assembly, Thiru Tamilkudimagan honoured Dr. M. Karunanidhi, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu with a shield and shawl on that historic occasion for his invaluable service as legislator for 25 years. The Chief Minister paid his regard and respects to the former members of the Assembly. Speaking on that occasion, the Chief Minister recollected the glorious traditions of the past and reminded every member to maintain dignity and decorum of the House and further it was the responsibility of every member also. He also said that due to certain incidents happening in the Assembly one should not think and speak ill of it. The Chief Minister said that so many laws had been enacted in the past, which helped a lot for social justice and economic uplift of the backward classes.

The Speaker Thiru Tamilkudimagan welcomed the gathering. The Speaker in the course of his speech mentioned that the former Chief Ministers Rajaji, Kamaraj and Perarignar Anna by enacting historic laws in the Assembly brought glory to the State. He also appreciated the former Chief Minister Thiru M.G. Ramachandran because he was responsible for creation of many universities in the State during his ten year regime. He also applauded the previous DMK regime for the creation of Slum Clearance Board and implementation of various social welfare schemes. Again the Speaker remarked that this Golden Jubilee should have been celebrated in the year 1987 but due to the illness of the then Chief Minister (MGR) it could not be celebrated. The Speaker said that the Chief Minister Dr. M. Karunanidhi's decision to confer rights on women to inherit property is a unique gift to the women.

The Education Minister Thiru K. Anbazhagan, M.L.A.'s and other party leaders spoke on that occasion. Everyone recalled the glorious traditions of the House.

SENIOR LEGISLATORS HONOURED

To mark the golden jubilee of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, 39 senior legislators of the past and present were honoured at a function held on 5th May 1989 at the Assembly Chamber in Fort. St. George.

Among them were 23 public men, who had been a member of the House for 14 years and more, five former Speakers and Chairman of the Legislative Council and 11 other who had been members of the Assembly for four terms. The Speaker of the Assembly Thiru Tamilkudimagan announced the names of the senior legislators. They were all presented with mementoes.

The names of the senior legislators who had been members of the assembly for over 14 years are given below:- Dr. M. Karunanidhi, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and Thiruvalargal ~~Thiru~~ K.K. Muthiah, Thiru V.R. Nedunchezhian, Thiru P.U. Shanmugam, Thiru K.R. Nallasivam, Thiru A.R. Subbiah Mudaliar, A.K. Subbiah, Panruti S. Ramachandran, K. Anbazhagan, S. Madhavan, Munu Adi, Pulavar K. Govindan, A.R. Marimuthu, T. Rajarathnam, S. Alagarswami, K. Kalimuthu, K.S. Ardhanareeswara Gounder, T.P. Elumalai, N.K. Palaniswami, Anbil P. Dharmalingam and Nellikuppam V. Krishnamurthi and Tmt. Anandanayaki and Tmt. A.S. Ponnammal.

The names of the former Speakers and Chairmen of the House are given below: Thiruvalargal. M.A, Manickavelu, M.P. Sivagnanam, S. Chellapandian, K. Rajaram and P.H. Pandian.

The names of the members for four terms are: Thiruvalargal, K.A. Sengottayan, K.K.S.S.R. Ramachandran, S. Thirunavukkarasu, K, Ramani, Durai Ramaswamy, C. Aranganayam, M. Andi Ambalam, A. Rahman Khan, S.J. Sadiq pasha, Veerapandi S. Arumugam and Durai Murugan.

Twelve more senior legislators were honoured on 5th May 1989 in connection with the golden Jubilee celebration of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, bringing the total number of Members honoured to 51.

They are: Thiru N. Mahalingam, Thiru Haja Shareef, Tmt. Sathyavani Muthu, Thiru A. Senpathi Gounder, Thiru T.M. Kaliannan, Thiru T.S. Swaminatha Udayar, Thiru S. Murugaiyan, Thiru T.M. Nallaswamy, Thiru N. Rajangam, Thiru M. Shanmugam, Thiru N, Marudhachalam and Thiru P. Jayaraj.

TIRUVARUR CAR FESTIVAL

The Thyagaraja temple car of Thiruvarur moved after six years on 7th May 1989. Lakhs of people witnessed this car festival, when it was drawn by thousands of devotees. Thiru K.P. Kandaswamy, the Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, inaugurated it. A pair of bull-dozers were used to push the temple car, and the four wheels of the car were controlled by hydraulic brakes designed by the Bharat Heavy Electricals. The devotees drew this 300 tonne car with great enthusiasm.

The devotees thronged the town to have a glimpse of the car and the 400 foot long ropes. Elaborate arrangements for the car festival were made and it was organised at a cost of Rs.6 lakhs. All four main roads of Tiruvarur around the temple were packed with lakhs of people, who had come from all over the State. Besides this giant Temple car, which will take three days to return to the starting point, four other cars carried the utsava idols of Vinayaka, Muruga, Ambal and Chandikeswarar.

The Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Minister Thiru K.P. Kandaswamy released a book published by the Thyagarajaswamy Devasthanam in Tiruvarur in connection with this Temple car festival.

The Minister said that donations had been raised to meet out the entire expense.

INAUGURATION OF STATE PLANNING COMMISSION

The Chief Minister, Dr. M. Karunanidhi on 15th May 1989 launched the reorganised State Planning Commission with himself as Chairman, at a function attended by Industrialists, Trade Union Leaders, Senior Government Officials and experts in various fields of social and economic activity.

This was in fulfilment of a promise he made at a meeting of industrialists soon after the DMK assumed power, to create a "Think Tank", the Chief Minister said.

A State Planning Commission was first constituted in Tamil Nadu, in 1971 by the DMK. But during the last few years, the role of experts was considerably reduced and the commission became inactive.

The new members of the State Planning Commission Dr. Malcom Adhiseshaiah, Dr. V.C. Kulandaiswamy, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, Thiru M.P. Sivagnanam, Dr. Ramani Sivaraman and Thiru G. Chidambaram, spoke on the occasion. They spoke about the problems to be tackled through planning. Dr. Malcolm Adiseshaiah said that the urgent tasks before the planning commission are to reduce the percentage of unemployment and the number of families below the poverty line. The State should not adopt the approach of the Central Planning Commission entirely, but should evolve its own strategy.

Dr. Kulandaiswamy said that the poor natural resources should not deter the State in its march forward, because "human resources" are more important than natural resources. The Tamil Nadu could reach great heights, if only attention was paid to improve the productivity of those in the unorganised sector, comprising 90 per cent of the work force.

Dr. Swaminathan a farm scientist, said that there should be a proper blend of modern science and technology. The majority of the people living in rural areas were young and unless they were given employment there itself, they would not stay in villages and migrate to cities in search of jobs.

Thiru Sivagnanam, a former IAS Officer of the Gujarat Government said that the main reason for the poverty of the majority of the population was that the fruits of planning and development had been mostly utilised by the 10 or 15 per cent rich. "This attitude should change".

Dr. Ramani Sivaraman, former Director of Medical Education, stressed the importance of reducing the infant mortality, child-mother care and health education through the electronic and mass media. Thiru Chidambaram, an expert in evaluation and applied research, called for proper monitoring of the development schemes for accelerating development.

The Chief Secretary to the Government Thiru M.M. Rajendran IAS., in his welcome address, said that this new Planning Commission was coming into existence at a crucial time when the State's economy and development was in a very poor condition. The focus should therefore be on changes in cropping pattern, use of less water and reclamation of waste lands. In the industrial sector, attention should be paid to employment generation by preventing sickness and reopening of closed units.

He also promised Government's co-operation in the effective implementation of the various schemes.

CHIEF MINISTER'S ADDRESS

Hon'ble Ministers of the Tamil Nadu, Members of State Planning Commission, Chief Secretary, Adviser, Secretaries of various Departments and friends

You may all be aware that in the whole country, a State Planning Commission was first constituted in Tamil Nadu in 1971 by the D.M.K. Government as a model to all other States and that this was then uniformly praised by one and all. But unfortunately during the last few years, the role of Experts in the Planning Commission was considerably reduced and the Commission also became inactive. When the D.M.K. Government came back to power and I assumed the Office of Chief Minister, I held a series of meetings with different sections of people. You may recall that at the meeting of the Industrialists held on 6th march, I informed, that the State Planning Commission would be constituted as a 'THINK TANK' with Experts in various fields and that I would also assume the Chairmanship of the Commission. Accordingly this Planning Commission has been constituted with Experts, known for their professional competence, rich experience and keen interest. I thank the Members of the Commission for accepting this additional responsibility despite their several other preoccupations.

During my reply to the Debate on the Budget in the Legislature, I had stated that the State Planning Commission would deem as its first duty, the formulation of the Eighth Five Year Plan. In this Age, Planning is very necessary for succeeding in any venture. Without a long term Plan, we may be spending our entire energy and attention in solving the day to-day problems without having any vision of the future. Particularly in today's noisy political climate with its emphasis on the "Here and Now", if a Government spend its entire energy and time only in solving the immediate problems without providing for the future welfare of the people, it will be a gross injustice to the very people, who placing their trust on them had voted them to power. To avoid that, a long term Plan with its focus on the welfare of the people is very essential.

To plan properly, it is necessary to undertake certain allied functions as well. To plan for the future, we should have a good understanding of the present. For that, we should have reliable data on the current situation. Hence, collecting the data and keeping them ready, is essential for proper planning. Further, the progress in implementing the Plan Schemes should be periodically reviewed. When different schemes under various Sectors are implemented, it is quite necessary to evaluate them to ensure that they are being implemented in the intended manner to achieve the intended objectives and to take appropriate remedial measures wherever necessary. Taking all these into account, Government have decided that the Planning Commission which formulates the Plan, should also have these allied functions and accordingly the functions of Data collection Evaluation and Plan Review, which were hitherto with the Government, have now been transferred to the Commission. In addition, the Government have also requested the Commission to advise them on the integration of District/Block level Schemes with the State Plan. All this will bear testimony to the confidence and trust that Government have reposed in the Commission.

At this juncture, when we have embarked on formulating the Eighth Five Year Plan, I feel, it will be appropriate, to briefly indicate the present state of development in the State and certain related issues.

Tamil Nadu has 7% of India's population but only 4% of country's area with the result that population density and man-land ratio is adverse. Except for Lignite and some oil deposit, we do not have any significant mineral resources. We are also located far awary from the coal mines of India. All modes of irrigation in Tamil Nadu-rivers, tanks and ground water-depend on rain fall and because of the vagaries of monsoon the State is also subject to frequent and prolonged spells of drought or floods and cyclones. Surface irrigation potential has already been more or less fully exploited. The State is also poor in Forest resources. About one-third of our population is in urban area and this necessitates large investments on basic services such as Housing, Water supply, Sanitation, Transport and Roads in urban areas.

Despite the above difficulties, the development in Tamilnadu during the last forty years, in several sectors, has been as good as in States which are relatively better in resource endowment. Tamilnadu ranks first in the country in rural electrification, rural water supply, number of energised pumpsets, passenger transport and Credit-deposit ratio in nationalised banks. Further, in respect of utilisation of existing irrigation sources, per hectare productivity in paddy, sugar, groundnut and cotton, per hectare consumption of fertilisers, infrastructural facilities, literacy etc., the State occupies a high place. But the fact that our progress is relatively better than other States should not make us complacent and lead us to the conclusion that we have achieved all that can be achieved. There is still, a lot more to be achieved. This will be clear if we compare our achievements with the international standars. Hence, we should take the achievements so far made only as an encouraging sign and strive harder to achieve still better results.

Despite these commendable achievements in various sectors, our State fares poorly in respect of Eradication of Poverty, Per Capita Income, and Employmemnt, which are the real touch-stone for Development. This peculiar situation, in fact highlights a major problem faced by the developing countries in general. For rapid Economic Development, Savings and Investment of the Savings in sectors essential for development are very necessary. But the benefits accruing out of these investments will be realised only after a number of years. In the intervening period, a democratic Government, cannot be insensitive to the question of satisfying the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter for the large and economically weaker sections of the society. We cannot indefinitely postpone satisfying these basic needs; nor is it feasible or fair to ask the people to patiently wait. But when we try to meet these basic needs, the available surplus for Investment may be reduced. Every time we prepare the budget, the question arises - whether to invest in future development, or meet today's basic needs. Both are important; and also interconnected in some ways. We should take into account this vital issue and the related questions, when we for-

mulate our future plans.

While formulating schemes in different Sectors, we should take care to see that they do not affect the Environment and the National Resources. We cannot undertake schemes, which in the long term will result in irrepairable loss to the environment, just because they appear profitable today.

We may be very keen to formulate several schemes for the welfare of the people but these schemes can be implemented only if our resources are adequate. In Tamil Nadu, we have raised resources mainly through taxation. But, we can raise resources in other ways too; through small savings, by reducing the infructuous expenditure in Government, by adopting stringent economy measures, by improving the working of the State Public Sector Undertakings, by making necessary modifications in the various schemes of subsidy from Government to ensure that they really reach only the deserving, by realising atleast the running costs in respect of several facilities provided by the Government.

We may formulate an excellent Plan; but it cannot be implemented in a satisfactory manner unless we have the support of the people. In order to ensure full co-operation and help from people, we should try to involve in the Plan implementation, the various democratic institutions at the District, Panchayat Union and Panchayat levels. This Government have reactivated the Panchayat Unions with the firm conviction, that power should not be concentrated in the Government but should be widespread. We should take measures to see that the democratic institutions in the rural areas keenly involve themselves in the Plan efforts.

In addition, we should also try to utilise the services of Non-Government Voluntary Agencies also. Some of these agencies have done excellent work and gained valuable experience in such fields as provision of drinking water, housing, public health and environmental protection. We should encourage their activities and make them a valuable ally in our efforts.

I have indicated only a few issues which should be kept in mind while formulating the Plan. There are many more issues and I am sure you will consider all these while formulating the plan.

I wish to convene the meeting of the Commission atleast once a month and participate myself in them. The Commission should also try to get the help and the co-operation of experts in various fields. Only then, we will be able to formulate a practical and feasible Plan.

I thank all the Experts in various fields, Industrialists, Trade Union Leaders, Editors and other friends from different walks of life, who have responded to our invitation and request them to extend all their help and co-operation to the Planning Commission. I would also like to inform that the Government will take a keen interest in the activities of the Planning Commission and that all the Ministers, Secretaries to Government and other officials will extend their full cooperation and support for the efficient functioning of the Commission. I would once again like to thank the Members of the Commission, who by accepting the Membership, have enhanced the prestige of the Commission.

Thank you.

Thiru A.K. Venkat Subramanian, Member-Secretary of the Planning Commission proposed a vote of thanks.

RURAL JOB SCHEMES

The Tamil Nadu Government is providing employment to nearly 2.15 lakh persons everyday in 6,000 works in "Drought-Hit Areas" and the workers are given rice and wheat apart from daily wages.

A sum of Rs.15 crores have been set apart for employment generation schemes in rural areas. Works like laying roads, desilting ponds and raising their banks are being done on regular basis in the drought affected areas.

The Government also granted concessions like waiving of land tax for the year in places where cultivation had been affected. Collection of Government loans and land tax arrears had also been deferred to next year. Farmers, whose crops had been affected could get a certificate from the District Collectors for conversion of their short-term loans into medium term loans.

Action had been initiated to sink 5,000 deep borewells at a cost of Rs.125 crores. Of this, 1,500 deep borewells had already been sunk and the remaining would be sunk before June this year.

For deepening open wells, providing drinking water through tankers and cleaning pumps, an additional sum of Rs.11.32 crores had been sanctioned. Of this, works totalling Rs.1.65 crores had already been completed.

HINDU WOMEN GET EQUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on 6th May 1989 adopted an amendment to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 in its application to the State, to confer equal inheritance rights for Hindu Women in relation to coparcenary property in Joint Hindu families governed by the *Mitakshara Law*.

It would have retrospective effect from 25th March 1989 the date on which the Chief Minister, Dr. M. Karunanidhi, announced the proposal for the legislation. The Law Minister Thiru S.J. Sadiq Pasha said that any partition or sale of property subsequent to that date in contravention of the provisions contained in the amendment would be null and void.

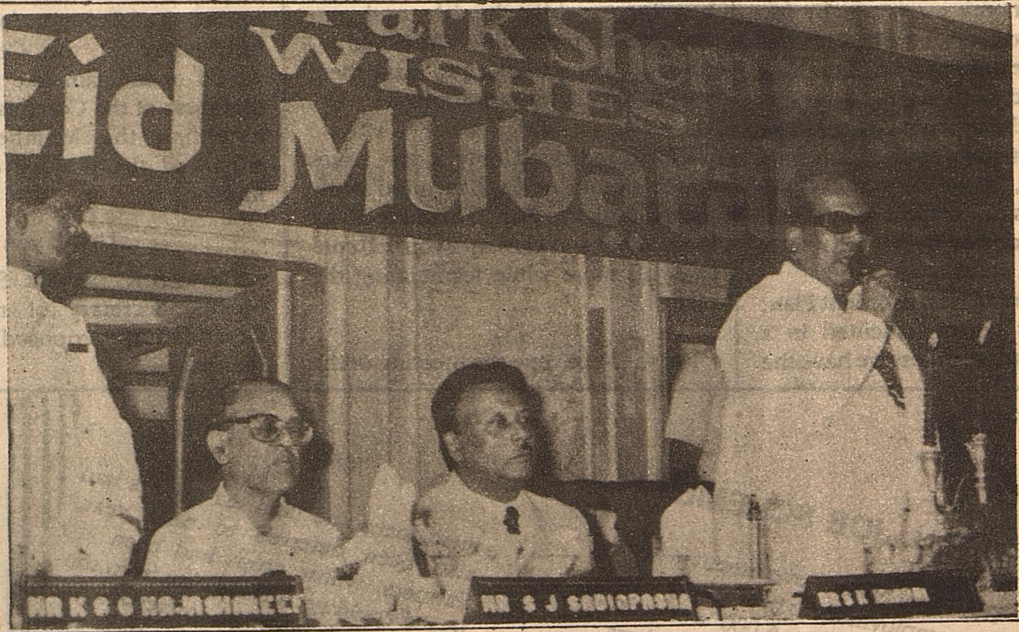
Everybody welcomed this move and no one was against this.

The Chief Minister said that the idea of equal rights for women and men was mooted in the form of a resolution at the first Provincial Conference on self-respect in Chingleput in 1929. After a lapse of six decades, the DMK Government had drawn up a legislation for the above purpose.

The Law Minister moved the Bill for consideration and said that at present, daughters were not members of the coparcenary under the Hindu Mitakshara Law and were not entitled to claim partition in coparcenary property. This had led to the creation of a socially pernicious dowry system with its attendant social evils. To eradicate these evils by positive means, which would simultaneously ameliorate the conditions of women in Hindu society, it was necessary to confer the same rights on a daughter as a son had in a Hindu Joint family.

The provision, however, would not apply to a partition which had been effected before the date of the commencement of the amending Act.

The Bill was welcomed by all in the Assembly and everybody felt that it would enhance the status of women.



EID-MILAN DINNER

A grand Eid-Milan dinner was hosted by the committee of hosts in Madras on 12.5.89. Hundreds of invitees from different faith and communities representing a cross section of the society including Ministers, Diplomates from other countries, Top officials of the state and central services, Judges, the Chiefs of Armed forces, social workers, Educationists, industrialists, professionals, and business magnates participated.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister, Dr. M. KARUNANADHI said that there were twenty seven lakhs Muslims in Tamil Nadu. Out of which over twenty six lakhs were backward. He assured that as ever he will remain a friend of the muslims and other minorities he would do his best for their upliftment.

Presiding over the occasion, Mr. SADIQ PASHA, Law Minister said that communal hormony had always prevailed in Tamil Nadu and he exhorted people from other states to visit Tamil Nadu to carry this message to the entire country. Mr. M.A. LATHIEF, M.L.A., spoke on the significance of Ramzan and appealed to the Chief Minister to build a Haj House in Madras for the pilgrims. Mr. K. VEERASAMY, Food Minister released a folder. Mr. DURAI MURUGAN, P.W.D. Minister participated.

Welcoming the gathering the convener, Dr. S.K. KHADRI said that Eid-Milan was being held for the past 14 years to promote mutual respect and understanding among people of different faiths and to promote national integration. Dr. G.S.M.P. KHADRI proposed a vote of thanks.

Edited & Published by the Director of I & PR., Govt. of Tamil Nadu.
Printed at Tamil Arasu Press, Govt. Estate, Madras-600 002.

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